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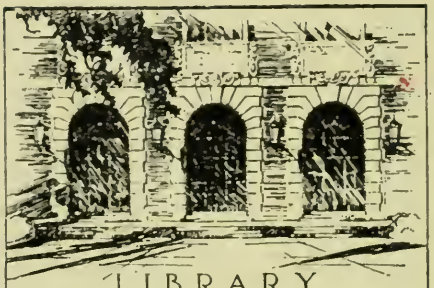

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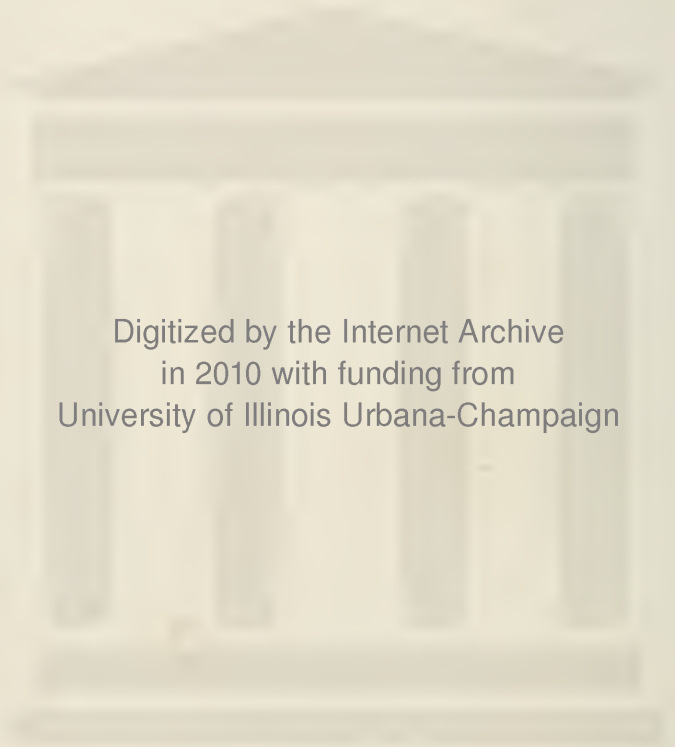

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VARGAS:

A TALE OF SPAIN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.
1822.

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VARGAS.

CHAPTER XXII.

Father! oh sacred title!
And to bestow it on a wretch.—A wretch!
To think him such is treason. I must change
My inmost soul, and look on vice as virtue,
Lest I should curse my father.

FROM THE SPANISH.

THE faithful people of Seville, the old Christians as they called themselves, were on the tiptoe of expectation. A new subject for conversation was afforded by the annunciation of an auto de fé! The ostensible cause of this rare solemnity was to celebrate the return of the Archbishop to his see after so long an absence, but there

were some secret springs at work in producing it with which I shall proceed to make the reader acquainted.

It is an old and a trite remark, that love unrequited turns to hate, and it will not, therefore, be considered unnatural that the disgusting feelings of the Archbishop towards Cornelia, to which it would be sacrilege to apply the sacred name of love, should easily be transformed into the most deadly revenge. Although formerly the idea of Cornelia de Bohorquia had only occurred occasionally to his mind as a kind of variety in villany and vice, it now beset him in its altered shape night and day—it was the one thorn in his side that seemed to comprise all he knew of pain. What he termed the cowardly conduct of the General Inquisitor, in regarding the authority of the canon, and admitting her plea

against torture, had nearly occasioned a breach between those colleagues in crime; but as the Archbishop had cunning enough to perceive that his power was raised so little above the Inquisitor's, in respect to the Holy Office, that a quarrel was more likely to lessen than to diminish his authority, he wisely forbore to press the point to a schism. He therefore nursed up his revenge, and, for the present, appeared satisfied with the imprisonment of Cornelia, taking care only that her dungeon should be one of the most comfortless and hopeless in the palace of the Inquisition.

The weak and miserable Marquis of Bohorquia was, in the mean time, given up to all the horrors of despair. Since he had discovered through Meneses that the Archbishop had been the means of his daughter's arrest by

the Inquisition, he had avoided all communication with the prelate. He imagined that Cornelia's faith had been called in question, and his mind had been so long led in chains by the Archbishop, that he found it impossible to break them now ; his habitual deference carried him so far as to suppose that any measure under his direction must be right, and he bewailed the result as an unavoidable misfortune. But enslaved as his mind and bigoted as his faith were, the feelings of nature rose up within him, and made him shun the man who, however necessarily, had brought this fatal affliction upon him. Accustomed to depend entirely upon the Archbishop for direction in all his affairs, he felt like a child without him ; and Meneses, who occasionally found means to converse with him, now im-

perfectly supplied the place of his former counsellor. It was under his auspices that the Marquis had expressed a wish to see Vargas, which Meneses had mentioned in his mysterious letter.

The Archbishop could not but observe that the Marquis shunned him, and of course he imagined that he was acquainted with his conduct to Cornelia. It became necessary, therefore, to put the wretched father also under surveillance at least, and accordingly the Archbishop required from the Inquisitor a trusty spy to whom he could confide a special charge. The Inquisitor would have despatched Diego Cachuco to his Excellency but that that worthy alguazil happened to be warmly engaged in the espial and pursuit of a highly interesting victim; and as the laby-

rinth of such a pursuit could not be transferred to another, Diego ventured to recommend his protegè, of whom he had now made some trial, and to whose advancement he was in a manner pledged. Meneses was accordingly sent to his Excellency with the Inquisitor's recommendation to confidence.

It may well be imagined that Meneses received his instructions with extreme delight. He was now rewarded for his courageous perseverance in bearing the drudgery to which he had hitherto been doomed. He had now a fair ground of hope that he might be really useful in the cause he had so warmly undertaken to support; he had now a fair field of action, but one which was likely to require all his prudence and the exercise of uncommon tact. He acquired no new informa-

tion in his conversation with the Archbishop, but he gathered from his Excellency's manner that there were more reasons than those which concerned the faith that had occasioned Cornelia's imprisonment. His directions were to watch the Marquis de Bohorquia strictly, and to give the Archbishop instant information of all his movements.

The mystery of the intercourse, the disinterested object he had in view, and the danger attending a miscarriage, were powerful incentives to a romantic young man like Meneses, and he now found full exercise for his caution and his courage. With the Marquis he had to soothe, to direct, and to restrain: for the Archbishop he had to arrange probable and satisfactory reports, to avoid exciting suspicion at the same time that he con-

veyed intelligence of a nature to lull into security. This double and difficult duty he managed to perform so well that he acquired a perfect ascendency over the mind of the Marquis, and was rising rapidly in the good opinion of the Archbishop.

He was introduced one evening into the closet of the Archbishop after the hour of siesta, and made the respectful obeisance which his apparent situation rendered necessary.

" Approach, Carretero," said his Excellency, addressing him by the name he had assumed upon his admission to the office of alguazil; " sit yonder. I have need of parlance with you. What information bringest thou ?"

" The Marquis de Bohorquia seems wholly given up to his beads and his breviary. I cannot hear that there is

any novelty in his household, or his course of life, except that he has decidedly given the direction of his conscience to the Friar Francisco Sitiar."

"The fool's conscience needs direction like a blind horse, and is directed as easily," answered the Archbishop.

"Your Excellency held the reins like an accomplished cavallero, and judges by your own art."

There was an alteration in the Archbishop's countenance indicative of pleasure, but it could hardly be called a smile, which word conveys an idea of something that imparts pleasure as well as bespeaks it.

The prelate continued—"Francisco Sitiar may e'en take his conscience into keeping. 'Tis a mighty heavy load of feathers. He will have

many a sin to hear of, and none worth the trouble of listening to. 'Tis well, 'tis well—there is no fear of Sitiar. The people say that fools herd together and friars drive them, but Father Francisco herds with the fools, and doesnot drive them, he! he! he!"

This was downright mirth, and, therefore, Meneses obediently laughed.

"But the Marquis, you are sure, knows where his daughter is?"

"Oh yes."

"And for her heresy?"

"So he conceives, as I have reason to imagine."

"Come hither, Diego, and listen; sharpen thy ears and seal thy lips: it were better for thee to cut out thy tongue at once than to use it respecting that which I will speak about. I doubt thee not: on the contrary, thy

aptness pleases me, and I confide in thee; but a hint will do no harm—remember it."

"I prize the honour of serving your Illustrious Excellency too highly to risk it by imprudence. I fear no other punishment than to be deprived of your Excellency's confidence."

"Attend," said the mitred man. "Cornelia de Bohorquia was taken to the Inquisition for heresy, but she remains there for folly."

Meneses was silent, and, after a pause of consideration, the Archbishop continued.

"I was present at her examination at the table of the Inquisition. I took pity on the poor thing. Pity is a dangerous thing for a priest to indulge in, for 'tis the fast breeding mother of another feeling, which befitteth not the frock and the cord. But

bishops were born of Adam, good Diego, and a mitre needeth flesh and bones to support it."

The extreme surprise that Meneses felt at the information which this speech conveyed to his mind, required all his self-command to restrain it; he, however, did restrain it, and not conceiving himself called upon to make any comment, he continued silent.

"What thinkest thou? the wench had offers made her of a paradise for a prison — of apartments here in the palace—rather a restriction of liberty, than an imprisonment. I would have stretched my power to have done this, more I could not; my conscience and the church's canon would equally prevent my being accessory to the release of a heretic; that could not be——"

There was another pause which Meneses, finding something looked for, filled up by ejaculating "Impossible."

"The dainty damsel—dame, forsooth, as she swears herself—she prefers a cell in the Inquisition to an alcova in this palace—a cell! hast ever seen the Inquisition cells, Diego?"

Meneses motioned with his hand in token of a knowledge of their horror.

"The idiot rolls upon straw in one of those pits, when a couch fit for an Empress awaits her."

"Absolute madness," said Meneses, "it were wise to send a Chirurgeon to the foolish creature."

"You shall play his part, Carretero."

"I, so please your excellency?"

"Aye, good lad: use what medicament may please thee, bring her to

reason and to my palace, and hold thy fortune to be at its very flood."

"Your Illustrious Excellency overrates my poor abilities, though justly estimating my zeal."

"Not a whit, not a whit, good Diego; I know thy abilities and I trust to thy zeal; take this note to the General Inquisitor, it will frank thy passage to the flint-hearted fair one. Let me see thee anon. And hold—a pair of doubloons may lighten thy heels in this business, though they load thy purse."

The Archbishop's protruding circumference rendered it inconvenient for him to make use of the common means of calling a domestic by clapping his hands, he was, therefore, in the habit of substituting a foreign custom by making use of a little whistle, which being now applied to his mouth,

a gentleman in waiting appeared, and conducted Meneses from the archiepiscopal presence.

I will leave the reader to imagine the astonishment and horror of Meneses at having the mystery of Cornelia's imprisonment thus cleared to him; and I will leave Meneses to pay his visit to the miserable victim, to carry comfort to her who had almost lost hope.

Visits to prisoners of the Holy Tribunal by persons employed for the purpose, who, bearing the semblance of compassion, were nevertheless occupied only in enticing them to give information which might afterward condemn them, were some of the means used by that satanic institution to put a mask of justice on their execrable decrees. Spies so commissioned frequently broke in upon the

deathlike solitude of the miserable wretches imprisoned in that palace of desolation; and, feigning an interest which induced them, by bribery or other probable means, to find access to their prisons, have too often obtained the confession of criminal circumstances which the torture has failed to produce. The Archbishop's note to the General Inquisitor made him suppose that Diego Carretero, the alias of Meneses, was employed upon this honourable and confidential service, and he was accordingly furnished with a carte blanche of ingress and egress to the prison of the hapless Cornelia.

In the execution of this office, as I said before, I leave him, and I beg the reader to walk with me through the Plaza del Catedral and the Calle del Alcazar, where we shall arrive at the

door of the Marquis de Bohorquia at the moment that the porch was entered by Don Bartolomé Vargas, who, upon his arrival at Seville, went directly to the house of his former patron, to whom his mind refused to give the nearer title which too frequently suggested itself.

To the call made by Vargas the door opened, the latch being raised with a string by an ancient domestic in the corridor above; to her shrill demand of "who is there?" Vargas made the customary reply of peaceful people—"*gente de paz;*" and the no less customary answer was returned, "enter in the name of the immaculate Mary, virgin and mother!" Vargas entered accordingly, to the great astonishment of the good dueña, who announced his arrival by the loud and frequent repetition of his name.

Continuing to ejaculate "Don Bartolemé! Don Bartolemé!" she made her way into her master's oratory, where the Marquis was alone in the infliction of certain penances, that had been enjoined him by his new confessor for the commission of sins, which, as, if I know them at all, I must know them like the friar, *sub sigillo confessionis*, I will not reveal to the reader. As the penance, however, does not come under the oath, there is no harm in my telling that the poor Marquis was condemned to repeat a hundred and eighty ave-marias *per diem*, and that he had just arrived at the ninety-seventh when he was thrown out of his calculation, the beads having fallen from his hands, by the sudden entrance of old Señora Gertrudis with the above-mentioned ejaculation in her mouth.

"Let him enter," said the Marquis, still upon his knees, "mine eye longeth to behold him."

Vargas, to whom the house was intimately known, and who conjectured that the Dueña's astonishment would lead her straight to where the Marquis was, had followed her footsteps, and now entered the oratory. The old man arose from his knees; the natural affection of his heart overcoming every other impulse, and his misfortunes softening all the sharper feelings which he had once entertained towards Vargas; he burst into tears, and, extending his arms, exclaimed "my son, my son!"

Vargas's gratitude and naturally affectionate disposition had assisted him in preparing his mind for this meeting. He had entered the apartment with feelings very similar to those which

agitated the Marquis, and his arms were instinctively extended when this exclamation suddenly checked all the workings of his heart, by violently interposing the dreadful barrier to his happiness. The effect upon him was like that produced upon a ship in full sail, when suddenly put about; he trembled, and his heart beat high and irregularly against his side, even as the shaking of the loosened sails against the mast; his progress, too, was stopped, and he stood still within a few paces of the extended arms of the Marquis.

Vargas's agitation was very naturally attributed by the Marquis to sorrow and shame for his conduct; and, stepping forward, he embraced him, saying, "My son, my son, receive my forgiveness!"

"That I am your son, may heaven

forgive *you*," said Vargas, disengaging himself; "that you left me to learn that I am your son, when that knowledge brought with it a deadly crime, *I* forgive you, and may you be forgiven above!"

The Marquis stood apart, gazing upon Vargas as upon one bewildered; at length he said, "misery! more misery! his reason wandereth."

"If with my reason I could lose the sense of the wretchedness which your silence respecting my birth has brought upon me—to be mad were to be happy."

"How did you know your birth, which, if I never told it to you before I would seek to hide from you now, that you might not find an enemy in a father?"

"An enemy! what greater enemy than he who could wish me to con-

tinue ignorantly in foul crime, rather than bid me fly from it."

"Holy Saint Leander of Seville, surely thou art mad! of what crime ravest thou?"

"In calling thee father, do I not call Cornelia my sister, and is she not my wife?"

The Marquis's surprise took away his power of utterance: he stood for a few moments in complete confusion, and when at last he was able to speak, his agitation and his horror found expression in the manner most habitual to his thoughts, he fell down upon his knees, and rapidly ran over invocations to the more celebrated Sevillian saints: "Holy Saint Isidor, venerable Saint Laurencio, virgin Santa Justa, Santa Aurea, Santa Flora, Saint Florencia, and Oh! most pure and immaculate Virgin, intercede, save, defend

us from such crime—*Ora pro nobis*—wretched youth, thou madest me thy father by marrying my daughter; he who gave thee life is the Archbishop of Seville!"

It is recorded, that in the wars of the Carnatic, a military criminal was condemned to be tied to the mouth of a loaded cannon and to be blown to atoms; that the match was applied to a little hillock of damped gunpowder, placed upon the touch-hole, while the wretch bound to the muzzle was gazing at it; that the powder wasted itself in harmless sparks, and the death-impelling charge beneath remained unignited. The feelings of this man as the sparks died away, unfollowed by the explosion which he anticipated, may possibly be conceived by the reader, and to them alone can I compare those of

Vargas at this conclusion of the Marquis's invocations. He had expected a full and formal confirmation of his being in a state to which death would have been infinitely preferable; the possibility of this not being the case had no more entered his mind, than the idea of escape had remained in the mind of the man bound to the cannon; and when he found himself saved from all the horrors by which he had conceived himself to be surrounded, the revulsion sickened his heart, and unnerved his mind. He could scarcely take in a conception of the truth; and its contingent consequences only faintly glimmered before his eyes.

When the energy of his mind returned, it was instinctively employed in an act of silent and unexpressed adoration of Providence, an unworded

thanksgiving to the Almighty Giver of all good. Rising from the kneeling posture in which he had performed this, he earnestly embraced the Marquis; but it was not until the tears found a ready current down his cheeks that his feelings were completely relieved. He besought the Marquis to explain further the circumstances connected with his birth.

"They are few, Bartolomé, and easily told," said he; "the present Archbishop of Seville has been my intimate friend for nearly forty years, until this unhappy stain upon the ancient faith of our house, has deprived me of my friend as well as of my daughter."

The origin of this stain was rising to the Marquis's mind, but Vargas diverted the current of his thoughts by

pressing questions upon the interesting subject he had referred to; he continued—

"When poor Cornelia was but a very infant, and her mother (may her soul rest in peace) had just been called to communion with the saints, Father Pablo, as he was then called, wrote me an urgent epistle, requiring of my friendship that I should take an infant into my house, in whom he was deeply interested; assuring me that the child was noble, and of old Christian blood by the four sides.* I would have done any thing for Pablo, and I instantly complied, without putting him to the shame of a confession that the child was his."

* *De los quatro costados.* The usual way of establishing the respectability of any one, was to prove that their grandfathers and grandmothers were old Christians; to express which, this phrase was used.

"Then you are not sure that the child was his?" eagerly asked Vargas.

"Oh, quite sure, my son!" replied the Marquis; "many conversations have I had with him on the subject, and all have tended to confirm my belief. Sad it is to reflect that such lapses from virtue—such breaches of propriety are but too common; so much so that they hardly excite the surprise which in the early days would have attended them. It would have been cruel and disrespectful in me to require or extort a confession from my own ghostly counsellor, to whom I had, alas! so many sins to confess; but his manner assured me, although he never acknowledged that you were his offspring."

The further conversation of Vargas with the Marquis was of a nature

highly interesting to themselves, but it might be less so to the reader; we will therefore leave them closeted together. When Vargas's heart had for a time expanded with the delightful sensation of freedom from the dreadful idea which had so long stinted the growth of every hope of happiness, he began to consider the new situation in which he was placed, and it must be confessed that it required to be contrasted with one absolutely insupportable to render it pleasing. To be the criminal offspring of a creature so disgusting in himself, and by circumstances rendered so little amiable to poor Vargas, was a most afflicting thought, and only preferable to the one which had haunted him since his last conversation with the Archbishop. Could Vargas have seen what a pan-

demonium the prelate's heart was—could he have known the thoughts that it harboured towards his wife, he would, perhaps, have regretted that he had been undeceived; he would have preferred to drag on his former load of misery, rather than have borne so heavy a change.

When Meneses saw Vargas and the Marquis, he prudently forbore to inform either of them of the extent of his discoveries; he comforted them with hope arising from his visit to Cornelia, without telling them the nature of his commission, which would have been incredible to the Marquis, and intolerable to Vargas. This herald of hope had also carried her into a region with which she had been very little acquainted,—into the dungeons of the Palace of the Inquisition, where

he had poured the balm of consolation into the miserable Cornelia's mind. It was returning from executing this office, and on his way to the Archbishop, that he tarried at the Marquis de Bohorquia's.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A plot! tho' hell itself can't match it,
An Alguazil is sure to hatch it;
With powerful heat of Don Dinero
He'll make your egg a full-grown sparrow;
And if mischances show the trick on't,
A face of impudence he'll stick on't
Shall fairly take suspicion off it,
And turn misfortune into profit.

THE ALGUAZIL.

NIGHT had closed in when Meneses appeared at the Archiepiscopal Palace, to report the execution of his commission. He was admitted without delay.

"Well, Diego, you were but now in my thoughts; what progress have you made—what says the foolish thing?"

Meneses assumed a grave counte-

nance; "Her spirit," said he, "is broken by the pitiable state in which she finds herself, but not so much as to render it prudent for me to execute at once the commission with which your illustrious Excellency has honoured me."

"Marry, then, thou hast done nothing! By the mass—but by thy delay I expected to see her with thee at the least," said the Archbishop fretfully.

"Foolish birds fly by times, but the wise walk till their wings will bear them," replied Meneses boldly.

"The matter, the matter," said the Archbishop, "what hast done?"

"I have laid a foundation that will bear much, so it please your Excellency to build thereon," said Meneses.

"Narrate—narrate," vociferated the Archbishop, impatiently motioning with his finger.

"I have forcibly explained to Doña Cornelia the absolute impossibility of leaving the palace of the Inquisition, unless it be in a San Benito, figuring in an auto de fé."

"Right, right," ejaculated his Excellency.

"I have remarked upon the inconveniences of her present abode, and I have awakened the hope that through my interference it may be changed."

"Very well, very well."

"If your most devoted servitor might presume to propose a further progress in this proceeding, I would venture to suggest to your Excellency, that while this my potion is taking its effect, and in furtherance of its operation, some softening of her imprisonment should be allowed, that she may believe that I can effect what I may hereafter promise."

"No, by the mass!" said the Archbishop, with a fretful jerk of the head, "the wooden horse or my palace are the alternatives."

Meneses commanded his rising indignation; and, bowing, said, "I will conform my measures to your Excellency's will."

"You have talked of an auto de fé—the prisons of the Inquisition want thinning; there shall be one commanded for the day of Corpus, or of St. Michael at the latest; tell her so, and let her know that it will sweep all the holes and corners of the palace, not excepting her sanctuary; see what effect that has, and attend me after siesta to-morrow."

Meneses bowed and retired; he avoided the house of the Marquis of Bohorquia, where he knew it would be impossible any longer to withhold

a knowledge of the true state of affairs from the anxious inquiries of Vargas, and he trusted to be able, when exposing the whole depth of the Archbishop's villainy, to suggest a plan, the hope arising from which might act in counterpoise of the misery he should occasion. Cornelia's situation called for instant relief; her mind and body both worn out by continual suffering, were reduced to the last state of weakness; he had failed in endeavouring to induce the Archbishop to consent to dilatory measures; he saw no resource but in a courageous coup de main, which, to his chivalrous imagination, appeared more feasible than it can possibly do to the calculating valour of modern heroes. The *how* and the *when* were the difficult questions which naturally occurred to his mind; to the last, the answer was

" instantly ;" and he pondered upon a sleepless pillow to find an answer for the first.

At dawn of day he started from his bed with all the exultation of anticipated success. Confederates were necessary to the wild scheme he had formed, and he knew of none in whom he could repose confidence. But Vargas's early life had been passed in Seville ; he must have many friends in the under class of society. This idea overcame all the reluctance which the generous Meneses felt at drawing the curtain, to expose such a scene of villainy in a father to a son—such a scene of misery to the husband of the devoted victim.

I will not delay the execution of Meneses' plan that I may describe Vargas's phrenzy. I could not convey an idea of it to the reader if I

would. The reader must form one for himself, and Heaven forbid that in so doing he should be assisted by the experience of any misery approaching that of poor Vargas. Earnest occupation in furthering the scheme suggested by his friend was the only alternation he found—was the only thing that saved him from actual madness.

There is a race of people in Spain called gitanos, which word the dictionary will translate gipsies; but the gipsies of England, the Bohemiens of the continent, very inadequately represent the character of the gitanos in Spain: they are a more distinct race of people; more numerous, more absolutely governed by their own laws, and more absolutely disregarding those of their country. Since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, the gitanos

appear to have carried on the minor traffic in which Jews of the lowest order are generally occupied in other countries, and they conduct it with even less conscience, and more feeling of separation from those with whom they traffick, than has ever been charged upon that persecuted race. To make use of such instruments as these men, would appear repulsive to an upright mind; but at the end of the sixteenth century, to obtain pious ends by unworthy means, was a permitted maxim of Romish morality; and although Vargas was a Protestant, his miserable situation will palliate his consent to the use of any means for the deliverance of Cornelia.

Seville has always been the head quarters of the Spanish gitanos, the capital of their government, and the chief resort of their tribe. Many

were in a comparatively settled state at Seville, exercising the ostensible trades of horse-dealers, or passing for a sort of gentlemen at large, but in fact being known as swindlers, smugglers, *metadors*, and assassins. It is necessary to explain the term metador, which is absolutely untranslatable, as it arises entirely out of the circumstances which occur nowhere but in Spain. When any galleon arrived at Seville laden with silver specie from the new and inexhaustible source of wealth lately discovered, if the owner of any part of it wished to cheat the King of the high duty which was imposed upon the importation of coin, he delivered his money to one of these metadors on board the vessel, and went his way, perfectly certain of receiving the whole amount safely transferred to his abode in the town.

What rendered this dishonest arrangement so extraordinary was, that an instance was scarcely ever known of the money intrusted to the metador being deficient when delivered to the owner. This inconsistent honesty to their employers, connected with the most flagrant villany in the act performed, was strongly characteristic of the gitanos. The following instance will confirm it, and give the reader a clearer knowledge of the sort of people whom Vargas and Meneses were obliged to employ. A jealous lover hired a gitano to assassinate his rival, and paid him twenty dollars for the job. The devoted rival happening to meet his fate by the sword of another and more honourable enemy, the gitano sought out his employer, and told him that though he never returned wages once received, yet that not

having earned his money as he had agreed, he was in debt to him a death, and that he had only to name an enemy that he might get out of debt as fast as possible. The employer assured him that he had no particular revenge upon his mind, and that he was very welcome to the money. The gitano was highly offended at the offer, and left him, advising him to quarrel with some one forthwith, for he was not accustomed to keep these things on hand.

These people were hardly ever called by other than indicative nicknames, and Vargas's old landlady in the suburbs of the city now procured him an acquaintance with a celebrated gitano, called Churipample, by whose powerful assistance all the external machinery of the scheme was arranged without difficulty and with

despatch. What that plan was I shall leave to be developed by the execution of it; and, that I may not forestal, I will content myself by shortly stating that all the secondary instruments which were afterwards made use of, were provided under the superintendence of Churipample: by his assistance a morning's work sufficed for arrangement, and before noon Meneses repaired to the palace of the Inquisition to visit Cornelia.

He there heard news which made him rejoice at the promptitude of his preparation, since it convinced him that time pressed. Cornelia's sufferings had produced the natural effect of prematurely calling to light, but not to life, the offspring of her ill-fated marriage. In consequence of her situation, the director of the lower prisons had, with unwonted

lenity, permitted her to receive the occasional attendance of a female servant, which relaxation of rigour had received the negative approbation of the General Inquisitor, who, upon knowing it, had not countermanded it.

The knowledge of the event could not be withheld from the Archbishop, and accordingly it formed part of Meneses' communication in the conference with his Excellency in the evening. The inhuman wretch did not attempt to curb his savage joy—"I'm glad on't, Diego — I'm right glad on't—it takes off her plea—she shall be tortured, Diego;" and with a fiendish expression of joy he repeated, "The wench shall ride the wooden horse, I tell thee."

She is so weak that she is like to

die, so please your Excellency," said Meneses.

"It does not please me that she should die untortured! Let the leeches be bid to use all skill in saving her; she shall groan for't, or I am not metropolitan of Seville."

The Archbishop's evil heart revelled in the anticipation of satisfied revenge, and he scarcely attempted to command the expression of his feelings. Meneses found it difficult to believe that he was gazing upon a human creature, as the deadly wickedness of his purpose appeared in his speech.

"She has brought it upon herself—she has refused kindness—she has spurned me—spurned *me*, Pablo, Archbishop of Seville!" and his blasphemous rage found vent in an exclamation

of the name of the Saviour, sinfully habitual in the mouths of almost all Spaniards, unspeakably impious upon the present occasion. "Never was the like known aforetime; let her take the alternative; let her delicate lips kiss the funnel, and the weights dangle on her pretty feet: and, by St. Pablo, to complete my revenge, she shall cover her fair form in a San Benito,* and be crowned with a carroza, and she shall sit on the pile with an uncorded throat.†

Meneses shuddered, and hardly ventured to look at the enfuriated visage of the mis-shapen demon before him.

* The dress of those who are sentenced by the Inquisition when they walk in the procession of an auto de fé.

† It was only in extraordinary cases that criminals were burnt alive; they were generally strangled before their bodies were placed in the chair by the pile.

The prelate began to feel that he was giving too loose a rein to his passion before the alguazil, and he therefore hastily said, "Get thee gone — see that the mediciner be diligent and skilful. I give her eight days to be strong, and I shall order an auto de fé in a month—begone!"

Meneses bowed and departed.

Oh! what a week of misery was that which followed this conference. All the torments of Pandora's box were let loose upon Vargas; but Meneses again was the personification of the Hope which accompanied them. Cornelia, however, gained strength more under the consolation of Meneses than the medicaments of the doctor. The consoler found his ingenuity as much exercised in forming probable ground of hope for Cornelia, as in framing matter to lull the suspicion

and occupy the thoughts of the Archbishop; and to calm the sickening anxiety of Vargas was the most difficult of his many duties. With unparalleled tact and patience he maintained the equilibrium of all these important points until the sixth day, when finding Cornelia sufficiently strong to bear removal, and Churipample waiting his commands in perfect readiness, he determined upon casting the hazardous die, which was to decide at once the fate of Cornelia, and consequently that of Vargas and himself.

On the sixth day, at his evening audience at the Archbishop's palace, he arranged his features to an appearance of satisfaction upon entering, and bowed obsequiously.

"Come hither, Carretero," said his Excellency; "thy face is in vacation,

and wears the holiday cloak; what news bringest thou?"

"I dare hardly trust my tongue to tell my news according to my own reading," replied Meneses, "lest my reading prove false, and I lose your Excellency's good opinion for aptness."

"Say on, good Diego."

"I have no authority to say that I have succeeded, other than my hopes afford me; but I consent to be held for an ill judge of a woman's mind if Doña Cornelia would refuse an invitation to your Excellency's palace, so I might be the bearer of it, and enforce it with some such rhetoric as I have lately used."

"Truly thou art a shrewd knave, Diego," said the Archbishop; "what sort of rhetoric might that same be?"

"The main art, so please you, has

been to find hot words for the wooden horse and the pile, and cool ones for the palace of your Excellency; plentifully to pour down the former, and but sparingly to scatter the latter, so that the much contemplated misery may reconcile to the less considered alternative. Doña Cornelia has expressed a desire to throw herself at the feet of your Excellency, to implore your compassion."

"Diego," said the Prelate, "the wench will come to implore my compassion when 'tis too late; but though it may be too late for her, it will be time enough for me: let her come—she can but go back again."

"Your Excellency will pardon me if I have mixed too much zeal in this matter. In bestirring myself I have sought but to serve your most illustrious Excellency."

"Thou dost serve me, man. Let the wench come, I say—let her come —the deeper my revenge the more it will pleasure me. Let me see her kneeling at my footstool. I thank thee for it, good Diego — let her come."

"If your Excellency will trust me with an order for her liberation, I will be your warranty for her safe conduct hither."

Meneses had here fallen into two great mistakes; he had made use of the word *liberation,* and he had offered *himself* for a warranty.

He became sensible of his error when the Archbishop repeated his words, with a sharp and undefinable look.

"Liberation! what liberation meanest thou?" Meneses had now need of all his tact to sooth the half-

awakened idea of suspicion. "I use words," said he, "as current coin, without weighing the value of each piece. I never was at Alcala, nor Salamanca. I mean an order for her passage from the palace of the Inquisition, to offer her own petitions at the footstool of your Excellency."

"I will hold conference with the General Inquisitor thereupon," said the Archbishop; "withdraw."

Meneses was in the act of retiring when the Archbishop countermanded his last order, by saying, "Yet stay—you shall be the bearer of a note to his Paternity."

They were in a small private apartment, and consequently Meneses was not far removed from the writing-table, at which the prelate sat. He gazed upon the paper with all the earnestness of anxiety, as the pen

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slowly traced the large square characters which were common at that time: even had the Archbishop perceived that his eyes were fixed upon the progress of his pen, he could have had no suspicion that the writing communicated any ideas to the mind of the alguazil, whose situation in life would have rendered it wonderful that he should be able either to read or write; Meneses, therefore, unsuspectingly became privy to the contents of his Excellency's epistle, as, to his utter dismay, the following words gradually grew upon the paper:

"Senor Inquisitor,

"Reasons which I will explain to you at our first meeting, induce me to desire, that, upon receipt of this, the bearer thereof be transferred to a dungeon upon the lower range. I

am at home in mortification, and fasting. Let the flint-hearted and heretic daughter of the Marquis of Bohorquia be sent to this palace in a coach, which I will despatch at night-fall. An alguazil (one the most confidential) can attend her. She shall be returned anon in safety, for which I am your security. May you live a thousand years.

† "SEVILLA."

All the art of Meneses was unequal to keep the colour in his cheek, as he read this letter during its composition. The Archbishop, however, was fortunately not a ready writer, and gave him time to recover his self-possession before it was completed. Being sealed, the alguazil received it, bowing the lower that his countenance might be the less observed, and turning his back upon his Excellency,

contrary to the usual custom. When he left the apartment, the usual call brought the attendance of the gentleman in waiting, who entered as Meneses went out. This victim of friendship, as he now considered himself, was yet undaunted, and waited a moment in the anti-room to draw breath and to summon up all his presence of mind. While he was still there, the gentleman in waiting re-appeared.

"Has his Excellency ordered his coach?" said Meneses carelessly.

"No, not his own coach, Señor Alguazil." Meneses stepped up to the domestic, and said, with much importance, "I know the matter in hand: a convenient vehicle can be had, I think, at one Churipample's, a gitano mule-vender in the Triana; his Excellency has intrusted me with

other business of deep importance, touching the same, or I would spare you the trouble of seeking it."

The attendant thanked the alguazil, and told him, in the every-day language of Spain, that he kissed his hand. Meneses left him with all the assumed bustle of most important business.

His fate—the fate of his friends—all hung upon a thread—the period for its decision was but an instant—his well contrived plan would seem to have made shipwreck, but hope, with its everlasting tenacity, hung to the shattered hulk, and whispered she will right.

He was with the gitano almost as soon as his thoughts were; his instructions were as rapidly given as cunningly received. It was arranged that Churipample was himself to be

the coachman, and his associates the running footmen, with the carriage to be hired by the Archbishop. This point being settled, Meneses flew to the Marquis and Vargas, leaving directions that a messenger should bring him intelligence if the event should answer his expectations, and Churipample's coach be called for by the gentleman in waiting.

Hitherto the attention of Meneses had been directed towards the liberation of Cornelia alone, and he now stated the possibility of her rescue to her husband and her father, with the most chivalrous heroism proposing to set the plan in motion by delivering the Archbishop's letter, and thereby sacrificing himself. Every feeling of honour and gratitude in Vargas's heart revolted at this proposition, and Meneses in vain argued

that the safety of Cornelia absolutely depended upon it; this was quite true, and the bitterness of the alternative produced the most agonizing feelings. Vargas called up to his mind the reasons which should prevent him from permitting this immolation. A young man already robbed of a noble alliance, taking upon himself all the labour of a servant, and the disgusting office of executing inhuman laws, for the benefit of the lady he had lost and his successful rival, and now coldly to be given over to those execrable engines of fanaticism, the dungeons of the Inquisition. Oh! this could not be allowed; and while his mind was thus wrought up, he snatched the fatal letter from off the table where it lay, and tore open the sealed cover, intending to destroy it.

In this, however, he was prevented by the less scrupulous Marquis, whose more selfish mind had been dwelling upon the results to Cornelia rather than those to poor Meneses. He read the contents, and providentially remarked, "No name is mentioned here, as that of the bearer of the letter."

Hope sent a full burst of her rays through the thick clouds which had been gathering round their heads; the letter was read and re-read, and all doubt of the necessity of Meneses becoming the victim was at once removed; and we must not too harshly condemn them for being reconciled to the necessity of making some other person take his place, when we consider the extremity of the case, and the very great probability there was that, when the mistake should be dis-

covered, as it would subsequently be, the locum-tenens would be restored to liberty.

The next point to be considered was, how to avoid the escort of the alguazil, commanded by the Archbishop, and desired by him to be "one of the most confidential." Here the ready invention of Meneses, joined with his daring spirit, converted the difficulty into advantage. He professed himself unable to attempt to copy the Archbishop's hand-writing, he being little accustomed to the use of the pen; but he proposed that Vargas should draw a careless line through the whole of that parenthesis in the letter, and write the name Diego Carretaro over the defaced words. He argued thus: the Inquisitor General knows that in this business I have had the confidence of the

Archbishop, and it will therefore appear no wise strange that his Excellency should at first have left the choice of a confidential alguazil to the Inquisitor; but, upon re-perusing his epistle, that he should have remembered the person in whom he had already confided, and pointed him out accordingly.

This reasoning was acquiesced in by Vargas, who accordingly made the proposed alteration with tolerable success; and, having copied the superscription upon another cover, they re-sealed it, using the impression of a relic formerly given by the Archbishop to the Marquis.

The high hopes which this arrangement excited, were considerably strengthened by the arrival of a messenger from Churipample. He was immediately admitted to the

anxious triumvirate, who hailed the intelligence he brought as an omen of ultimate success. The gentleman usher of the Archbishop had sent to hire the coach of Churipample to be at night-fall at the prelate's palace. Although they were thrown out of their reckoning by its being ordered to the palace, yet, so far so good, they were secure of co-operating allies in the coachman and attendants. When the messenger, a tall gitano, had delivered the intelligence he had in charge, he seemed to wait in expectation of his reward. The Marquis searched for his purse, and Meneses, in the mean time, looking alternately at him and at Vargas, took up the newly sealed letter, and half undecidedly gave it to the gitano, saying, at the same time, "Friend, here is a letter which has need of in-

stant delivery to the General Inquisitor at the palace in the Triana, and here is a doubloon for your trouble in delivering it."

"A doubloon for delivering a letter?" asked the man, "and for what else?"

"Nothing else but to use thy best speed in so doing. If thou refusest gold, there be others that will not," said Meneses.

The man took both the gold and the letter without further demur, only remarking that to be sure it was well worth a golden ounce, if it was only to look through the porter's window in the porch of the Inquisition. Meneses' conscience smote him; but he looked at Vargas, and silenced his inward monitor. As his presence, however, was absolutely necessary when the note was delivered, he followed

the entrapped gitano, having made the necessary arrangements with Vargas and the Marquis; and as it was equally necessary that there should be no delay or miscarriage in delivering the letter, he took care to keep the messenger in view, though without allowing him to perceive that he was watched.

CHAPTER XXIV.

From darkness of despair, to light
Of liberty the maiden leapt,
More dazzling from the deep deep night
Perpetual in her prison kept.

LEONTINE AND BELINDA, A BALLAD.

THE reader has already been informed that the house of the Marquis of Bohorquia was near the cathedral, and also that the palace of the Inquisition was the Moorish fortress in the suburb, called Triana, which lay on the other side of the Guadalquivir. The distance between them was therefore considerable, and Meneses was alarmed upon descending into the street at observing the height of the shadows cast by the houses on one

side upon those of the other. This alarm was increased when he observed that the pace of the gitano was by no means rapid; still it was not so slow as to induce him to quicken it by speaking to him, which, under the circumstances, his conscience made him loth to do. His patience was, however, completely exhausted, when he found that the messenger had been unable to resist the inspiring sound of a fandango, which, bawled by some of the loudest voices in Andalusia, and accompanied by the jarring twang of a loosely strung guitar, was the mainspring which put in motion the feet of a couple of figurantes, who, in spite of the uneven paving of the street, were exercising themselves in the extraordinary attitudes of their national dance, excited almost to inebriety by the ayes and olés and clapping of hands

of some dozens of envying spectators. From a distance the gitano had added the echo of his palms, and the "viva" of his stentor voice to the congenial shoutings of the throng, and when he joined them, Meneses lost all hope of his delivering his letter in time, and with hope he lost all patience.

Meneses mingled with the merry rabble, and was about to pull the careless messenger by the cloak, when his purpose was effected by another means. The streets in Seville, as in all other towns in Andalusia, are extremely narrow; the dancers and spectators occupied the whole breadth of that in which they were; their mirth was, however, interrupted by the necessity of making a passage for a hired coach which was passing at a slow rate, to take up. This was no other than the vehicle of Churipample, whose ap-

pearance would have distracted Meneses, if it had not at the same time brought back the remembrance of his commission to the mind of the gitano, who, when it had passed, pursued his way to the palace of the Inquisition, and had got beyond the sphere of the fandango's attraction before the fascinating sound had renewed its effect upon him.

"Now," thought Meneses, "all will go right; here we are at the gate of the city—we have only to cross the Alameda and the bridge, and we shall be there."

But, alas! though they were at the gates of the city they were not through them; and almost at the moment that the gitano arrived at its narrow entrance, the municipal guard was called forth by the sound of a cracked drum, which echoed the information

given by a tinkling bell, that the Host approached.

" His Majesty ! His Majesty !" said twenty voices at once, that being the highest title given in Spain, then and to this day, when *their Majesties*, the Almighty, and the King, are familiarly talked of in connexion.* Every one fell upon his knees where he stood, awaiting the approach of the procession, the flaming flambeaux in which began now to overpower the dwindling remains of expiring twilight. The gitano, whether from disinclination to the worship, or desire of executing his commission, remained erect, and

* At this time when every ear in Europe is familiarized to the title of " His Majesty," as applicable to royalty, the exceeding arrogance of Charles V. who first adopted it, is not sufficiently estimated. He assumed it in a country where it was then exclusively applied to the Deity, and where it still preserves its original application.

was evidently endeavouring to elude the necessity for prostration, when, in brushing by a devout woman who was kneeling in the gateway, his progress was arrested by a pull by the cloak—a sort of gentle hint to amend his irreverend conduct.

"Señor!" said the woman, "His Majesty!"

The messenger disengaged himself, and was proceeding, when the good lady, crossing herself, vehemently exclaimed, "A heretic! a heretic—he refuses to worship His Majesty!"

The imminent danger attending that fatal epithet, instantly brought the gitano down upon his knees, though at some little distance from the procession, which now drew near. The prostrated bigots beat their breasts with clenched fists as the consecrated

elements approached, and the thumps inflicted upon himself by the gitano seemed as if they were meant to wipe away all suspicion that there was truth in the foul stigma just cast upon him; he continued his inflictions during the whole time the procession passed. Meneses, too, beat his breast with a force which might bespeak much self-abasement and devotion to those around him, but which, in fact, proceeded from his suppressed impatience and irritation, which vented itself in vehemence.

The procession "dragged its slow length along," and Meneses counted a minute at least to each step of the canopy-bearers. At length it passed, and he started up to follow the messenger, of whom he had lost sight in the confusion. He proceeded, looking anxiously and carefully about. He passed over the long bridge of boats

across the Guadalquivir, and he caught sight of him at last within a hundred yards of the Inquisition; but he was holding soft parlance with a young gitano.

Although in despair at this new delay, he had an insurmountable reluctance to accost the gitano. The consciousness of the injury he was about to cause him, as he considered, unavoidably fastened his feet to the place where he stood, and he deferred speaking, minute after minute, in the anxious hope that it would not be necessary to give any further impulse to the unfortunate man. His patience, however, waned fast, and at length his conscience lost all power over him. He summoned up courage, and boldly stepped forward, when, as he came within hearing of the conversation

which was going forward between the messenger and the damsel, he heard her say, " Trust not the end of thy moustachio within its walls, man. What! a gentleman of the sword and dagger venture on the porters' side of a prison! If I were a bird I should as soon think of flying into a cage."

" But I tell thee, thou eye-reigning tyrant, I have felt the weight of a golden doubloon for the job."

" With which you intend to buy straws of the rats, or flies of the spiders, they being the only workmen that keep shop in the dungeons of the Inquisition; rather come with me to the confectioner's, and buy caramelos for the girls at the dance to-night."

" Whether it be by daunting or tempting I know not, but thou hast broken my purpose; I will but thrust

the scroll to the porter through his spectacle bars in the gate, and be with thee in the doing of a death.*

" Use the speed of thy best spur, and I'll await thee," replied the gitano as the man ran off.

Meneses held his breath with anxiety as he watched his progress to the gate of the palace of the Inquisition. The increasing darkness rendered it necessary that he should keep close to him, to be able to mark well his movements. On arriving at the great gate, the gitano peeped into the little square grated hole with which it was provided, for communication with the porter without opening the gate.

" Halloo, Señor porter!"

* *En el hacer de una muerte.* A familiar phrase expressive of the rapidity with which these sort of gentlemen performed the commissions of that kind with which they were charged.

" What wantest thou, friend ?"

" Here's a dispatch for his most excellent Excellency the General Inquisitor, to reach his hands with instant speed."

The letter was taken through the door, and the messenger was again by the side of his cunning adviser before Meneses had time to cross himself, and bless his saint for the escape of the gitano, and the relief to his own conscience. With a light heart and a firm hand he raised the ponderous knocker on the gate, and having made himself known through the little grating, he was immediately admitted.

He had hardly entered the hall of attendance, commonly used by the alguazils in waiting, when he was summoned to the presence of the General Inquisitor.

' Carretero, said that dignitary,

" hast thou been with his illustrious Excellency to-day?"

" I have, most Reverend Sir; I left his presence this after-siesta."

" What passed during your conference?"

" I had matter to divulge to his illustrious Excellency. I found him writing; upon my entrance he made some alteration in the matter he had been noting down, and delivered a letter to a person whom I found in presence?"

" Who was that person? Art thou acquainted with him?"

" I took no special notice of the man, for his Excellency's discourse was of matter which well required my earnest and humble attention."

" Touching Doña Cornelia de Bohorquia, was it not?"

" His Excellency bid me expect to

receive a confidential commission from your most Reverend Paternity this evening, and his discourse was touching the execution of it, in conveying the Señora Doña Cornelia to the palace."

"Right, right," said the Inquisitor, "take this order to the director of the lower range of prisons, and when his Excellency's coach arrives, escort the lady according to your orders; take with you Sanguero, Perritona, and whomever else you require, and who may be in the hall of attendance."

Meneses received the order with fear and trembling; the object of all his long probation appeared to come within his grasp. This agitated him, and perhaps the recollection of the trick which the Archbishop had intended to play him in making him the bearer of his own warrant of imprison-

ment, had some little share in his present feelings. The Inquisitor seemed absorbed in thought, and did not notice the trepidation of Meneses; but he was awakened from his reverie by an omission of a formal respect in the conduct of the latter, who left his presence without the permission for which, under every circumstance, the alguazils always waited. The door was still in the hand of Meneses when the Inquisitor's voice, at a high pitch, reached his ear. "Return," said he.

The nervousness with which Meneses re-entered the apartment was excessive.

"How is this, sirrah," said the Inquisitor, "has the confidence of the Archbishop made you forget the respect due to your master, that you insolently presume to turn your back unpermitted? by St. Dominic thou

shalt rue the boldness of thy bearing."

Too much depended upon the approaching event, for Meneses to hazard any thing. He endeavoured to appease the Inquisitor by falling down upon his knees, and humbly soliciting forgiveness for his apparent want of respect, alleging that his mind being fixed upon the execution of the important duty confided to him, he had unwittingly forgotten the necessary form of etiquette. His real agitation and his humble manner prevented the Inquisitor from venting upon him any more of the bad humour which the escape of the bearer of the Archbishop's letter had produced.

"Get thee gone," said he, "thy head shall answer for thy failure in respect, if it should be repeated."

Meneses being determined not to

be deficient a second time, rose from his knees, walked backwards to the door, and remained there until the Inquisitor repeated his "Get thee gone," when he left his presence, hoping and trusting from the bottom of his heart, that he should never enter it again.

He was not long in descending to the dungeon of Cornelia; but I will take advantage of the few moments that were occupied by him in so doing, to carry my reader to the palace of the Archbishop in Churipample's coach.

When the arrival of the coach was announced to his Excellency, he, at first, desired it to be dismissed, and his own coach to be prepared; but recollecting, upon second thoughts, that it was a day when all the good Christians of Se-

ville were strictly fasting, and would doubtless be scandalized at the appearance of the Archiepiscopal parade in the public streets at such a moment of mortification, he countermanded his first order, and desired that the hired coach might wait his pleasure. What his pleasure was he had not yet determined. His confidence in Carretero had been shaken; and with him "to doubt was to be resolved;" if this had not been the case the Archbishop would have employed him in this affair; but, as matters stood, he had no confidant sufficiently trustworthy immediately at hand; besides, the truth was, he wanted to go himself; and, after rather a sharp contest between his idea of dignity and his restlessness of revenge, the acquired feeling of the former gave way to the indigenous growth of the latter; and, laying aside

his embroidered vestments, he assumed a simple cassock and cloak, and thus attired he was crammed into the vehicle. This said coach, with Churipample for a guide, and two of his companions for attendants, rolled up to the portal of the palace of the Inquisition, within which Meneses was waiting with the happy Cornelia. He had totally disregarded the injunction of the Inquisitor with respect to the choice of companions to be employed upon this service. The porter, it is true, thought it extraordinary that a single alguazil should have been considered sufficient for the escort of a noble and important prisoner; but the carriage arrived so soon, and the written order of the General Inquisitor was so clear and express, that there was neither reason for demur nor time for representation; the folding

gates were thrown open, and Meneses tremblingly supported his prize out of the walls of that hopeless prison, which she had never thought to leave again. Meneses placed her in the coach, and sprang in after her.

It was with utter dismay that they discovered that they were not alone. The shape of the mass of flesh which occupied one of the seats convinced them both that it was the habitation of the evil spirit of the Archbishop: they were both silent; Cornelia from extreme agitation, and Meneses from the reasonable fear that he might have been recognised; and that now, even now, at the very completion of all their hopes, one word to the porter might frustrate all their plan, prevent their escape, and cut them off for ever from hope—from the world—from life.

It was a moment of intense interest and anxiety; the very trifling delay between the closing of the door and the moving of the wheels, was an age of extreme agony; but the wheels *did* move, the coach proceeded, and the word was not said by the Archbishop which would utterly have ruined them: apparently when the short gleam of light had shone upon Meneses' countenance in opening the door, his Excellency had been otherwise occupied, and had not observed that the attending alguazil was Diego Carretero.

A distance of less than three hundred yards brought them to the bridge of boats which connects the suburb of Triana with the city of Seville: it is now of the same construction as it was at the time of the siege of Seville, when the town was defended by the

Moors, and lost by them principally in consequence of the bridge of boats with its chains and defences being forced through by the celebrated Admiral Don Ramon Bonifaz, who drove two large ships violently against it. The distance across is considerable, the river being at that time capable of admitting ships of the largest burthen up to the city, although its navigation has since been impeded by accumulated banks of sand. The bridge being constructed of planks laid across large boats, its breadth was inconveniently narrow, so much so that but one of the moving houses, called coaches, could pass at one time; and, therefore, whenever any vehicle was to cross the river, whether a waggon for the conveyance of merchandize, or, more rarely, any of the few carriages used by the grandees and some

rich merchants, a pursuivant was dispatched previously to entering upon the bridge, to prevent the advance of any other vehicle from the opposite side, and to warn all foot-passengers that they should stop until the somewhat dangerous burden should have been rolled from off the creaking planks.

As the carriage which contained the silent trio approached the bridge, one of Churipample's associates went forward with speed, apparently for this usual purpose; but, having arrived at the city side, he performed the double duty of giving information to the party there waiting, and of guarding the entrance of the bridge from the approach of any persons who, from possible circumstances, might be induced to interfere in the preparing fray. In this latter office

he was assisted by a couple of stout gitanos, placed there for the purpose.

The coach rolled upon the unsettled surface of the bridge: the rumbling noise of its wheels, as they slowly turned, made the heart of Meneses leap for joy, while Cornelia, who had received but very imperfect information from Meneses while conducting her from the dungeon, was in a state of most agonizing anxiety. Prow after prow appeared on each side of the carriage, projecting from the bridge below them, as they passed the several boats of which it was composed. No interruption occurred, but Meneses' very teeth chattered with the nervous anticipation of the further execution of their plan. From the moment that he had observed the unexpected and fearful addition to

the party upon which he had not calculated, his busy mind had been at work to discover some means of preventing the failure which might too probably be the consequence of the prelate's presence. He felt at once the folly of any half measures, or any thing like wavering or fear, and he therefore screwed his courage to the sticking-point, and determined that the abominable Archbishop should be deprived of the power of speaking the instant he attempted to use that power; and with this intention he had loosened the long silk sash that he wore, to have it ready to be used as a gag, if occasion should require.

They had now reached the centre of the bridge, when the coach stopped. No voices were heard; and the first noise that struck the ears of

those within the coach, was occasioned by the opening of the door.

"What's the mat——?" the Archbishop attempted to say; but the ready and active arm of Meneses impeded the further utterance of intelligible sounds at least, by cramming the prepared sash into his Excellency's mouth, at the great risk of choking him.

While Meneses was thus disagreeably occupied, Vargas, for it was he who had opened the door of the coach, raised the fainting form of his wife from her seat. The inconceivable happiness of pressing her to his bosom really, virtuously, lawfully his wife, almost unfitted him for the exertions which the crisis so urgently called for: it was great now in proportion as it had been so long considered beyond the bounds of pos-

sibility. To recognise him at such a moment, and under such circumstances, was too much for the weakened frame of Cornelia to bear; she fainted in his arms, and in this state was lifted by her husband, with the assistance of the confederate coachman, over the railway of the bridge into the prow of one of the boats which supported it, and from thence into a fishing boat which was fastened to it.

In the mean time Meneses was grappling with the corpulent Archbishop, and had succeeded, though with difficulty, in keeping the silken gag in his mouth; but the muffled croak which proceeded from it, as well as the delay of his friend, now called the attention of Vargas, who, having left Cornelia in the care of the men in the boat, returned to ascertain

the cause. His horror and dismay at discovering it cannot be described. He had hoped never to look upon the creature of sin whom he was forced to consider as his own father, and the sight was the more afflicting as it came to interrupt the first feeling of joy he had experienced for many a day. But in good time did he join his friends on the bridge, for his appearance prevented a very dreadful consummation of their plan. Churipample having assisted Vargas to lift Cornelia over the bridge, turned to Meneses for orders. The gitano had no conception that he had got the Metropolitan of Seville himself in his coach; and upon being told this important secret by Meneses, who called on him for assistance, he broke forth into a paroxysm of rage, venting it in violent oaths and blasphem-

ous curses, and declaring, that his life was not worth the hose of a barefooted friar if the Archbishop ever sat in his palace again.

"He must not indeed get there for one while," said Meneses, pressing the little man's throat with one knee, while his hands were occupied in holding his wrist exhausted with struggling, and in confining the sash to his mouth: "Make haste then and help me to get him into the boat."

"Get him into the boat! into the river you mean," answered Churipample; "fine fish we shall have in the market of Seville, by Saint Ramon."

The hapless Archbishop, in despair at hearing these words, made another violent effort to get loose. Meneses was almost exhausted himself, and put Churipample in mind that there

was no time to lose. "I can struggle no more, I tell thee; help me to bind the wretch, and let us throw him into the boat."

"I'll stop his struggling," said Churipample coolly; "better that an Archbishop should drop his life like a bull at the matador's point, than that the bones of an honest gitano should be broken by the pulley in the Inquisition;" and he drew forth his unerring two-edged knife, saying, "Churipample's blade serves both for shrift and unction." With his arm bent for the execution of his purpose he was stepping into the coach, when Vargas having distinctly heard the latter part of this conversation, overleaped the railway of the bridge, and seizing his arm behind, suddenly wrenched the deadly weapon from his grasp. The Archbishop, urged to desperation by

Churipample's evident purpose, made a more effective attempt to disengage himself than he had hitherto done. Suddenly throwing his head on one side, he slipped from the pressure of Meneses' hand, and, raising his round body erect, he forced Meneses back, by which action he relieved himself from the gag, and instantly made use of his lungs to vociferate—"Murder! murder! help! help!" In this situation Meneses, whatever he might have wished, could hardly have interposed to prevent the execution of Churipample's design, and the Archbishop was therefore upon the very threshold of death when Vargas's timely interference reprieved him.

"I will be your warrant of safety if you obey," said Vargas, as the gitano turned fiercely round; "but," continued he, presenting a pistol to his

head, " I will blow your brains out if you resist."

" A rope! a rope!" said Meneses, who, having again overpowered his Excellency, was fully occupied in giving effectual hindrance to his hoarse cries.

Churipample now felt the importance of not wasting time; for the Archbishop's momentary, but loud cries, had evidently attracted attention, as they discovered, by a collecting of voices on the Triana side of the river—" For heaven's sake bind his arms behind him," said Meneses.

" *I* may not handle the man," replied Vargas; " though we should fail, I dare not."

But Churipample, with whom no such objections existed, was sensible of approaching danger, and with speed and ease he fastened the arms

of his Excellency with the halter of one of the mules; then taking him by the heels, as Meneses supported his shoulders, they unceremoniously let him fall over the rail-work into the boat beneath, without interposing the intermediate step of the prow of the vessel that supported the bridge, which, nevertheless, *they* availed themselves of in descending. Churipample followed his employers into the boat. "Arre!" said he to the mules, as he sprang into the boat, and the coach rolled on by the guidance of one of his companions. "Hiza! give way!" said Vargas, as they took up the oars, and dashed them into the ripling tide, impelling themselves a boat's length at every stroke. As the rumbling sound made by the coach gradually diminished, they thought that they heard

also the sound of voices at the opposite end of the bridge. Meneses blessed all the saints that are venerated in Valencia, and Vargas silently but fervently poured forth his gratitude to the Ruler of all events.

CHAPTER XXV.

Thus were mingled their voices of wrath and of jest,
They sought to sing loudest, *he* sought to scream best;
And the rage of the Reprobate voiced by the Devil,
Who quickly assists when the passions are evil,
With its heart-bursting efforts out-trumpetted still,
The laughter that vied in stentorian skill.

RODERICK THE REPROBATE.

VARIOUS were the emotions which agitated the different bosoms that were borne by the fishing boat up the broad Guadalquivir, with all the rapidity that four oars, impelled by strong arms and stout hearts, could give it. The number of persons it contained was six; for Vargas, fearing lest the knowledge of their plan might get into too many hands, had

employed only a single boatman, but had taken care that the boat should be provided with extra oars for Meneses, Churipample, and himself. The boatman, as at every pull he accompanied his exertion with his voice, possessed the only unoccupied mind. Vargas, who sat behind him, moved his arms mechanically, while his thoughts ran in a chain of alternate joy and melancholy. His situation with respect to his wife was the source of exquisite sensations of delight, which, on the other hand, were too frequently interrupted by the remembrance that the groaning of the Archbishop suggested; and the sacredness of his relation to that man of sin inflicted misery upon him in as great a degree as the more agreeable object of his thoughts produced pleasure. The chivalrous and disinter-

ested Meneses, who occupied the next seat, was giving himself up to the enjoyment of their escape from the imminent dangers which had surrounded them; occasionally indulging his fancy with an anticipation of the period when the world would be edified and favoured by the publication of "the Chronicle of the renowned Knight, Don Diego Meneses, of Valencia," of which the present perils and adventures would form the foundation, and sometimes intermixing his reveries with considerations of the means of disposing of their unwilling companion. Churipample, the last of the rowers, was sullenly turning in his mind the best way of providing for his own security; and cursing himself for meddling with a scheme which led him into such a dangerous dilemma as running away with the Metropo-

litan of Seville must inevitably prove. Of the other two passengers in the boat, Cornelia, although recovered from her swoon, was too much weakened by her imprisonment and recent illness to be able at once to estimate fully her almost miraculous preservation; and, besides, her fears were not quite subdued at the ill-formed body of the Archbishop, which, placed upon his back in the stern of the boat like a turtle, made like it awkward attempts to attain a more natural posture, and occasionally endeavoured to exert his voice, but fruitlessly, as Meneses' sash was tied tightly over his mouth.

They had not proceeded far in this manner before all the four rowers held their oars and their breath as if by one impulse. The dashing of other oars in the direction from

whence they had come, struck all their ears at the same moment: the recurrence of similar sounds convinced them all that they had not been deceived, and the idea that they were pursued occurred to each.

"Give way firmly," said Meneses; "pull all with your best sinews; remember the Inquisition is behind us, and if we return, we return to its dungeons!" and he set the example, which was followed by his fellow-labourers, each with a different exclamation, adapted to the current of their individual thoughts.

They rowed on with all their force, but they soon became sensible that the boat behind them was certainly in pursuit, and, what was still worse, that it was certainly gaining upon them. This conviction aroused them to greater exertions, and not them alone,

but it had a similar effect upon his illustrious, and hitherto despairing Excellency, who, by the constant and raging motion of his chin, had already so far loosened his suffocating bandage, that the inspiring impulse of a new hope gave him power to complete the work of liberation so far as concerned the operation of his lungs. Of these he presently made use, and, to add to their dismay, the rowers were suddenly alarmed by his violent vociferations.

"Murder! help! row hard — the villains are nearly exhausted."

"Poniard him strait," said Churipample, "or cut out his tongue at the least."

This produced another and a louder exclamation of "Murder!" from the alarmed prelate.

Churipample was about to step over

the other rowers to act upon his own advice, when Vargas exclaimed, "If you leave your oar but for a single stroke we shall be all lost." The gitano felt the truth of this, and rapidly resumed his work with curses and execrations.

The Archbishop continued his cries without intermission, and they could hardly have failed of being heard by the pursuers, if Meneses had not devised a plan for diminishing their force, if not of drowning them altogether. "Sing, sing," said he to the boatman, "instantly a song in full chorus."

The boatman, whose mind was more ready for the purpose than any other present, without hesitation gave forth the commencement of a favourite song, in which he was joined, *con amore*, by Churipample. Finding,

however, that his Excellency's rage and despair gave almost supernatural power to his voice, and that its tone rivalled, if it did not excel, this duet, though sung *fortissimo*, both Vargas and Meneses forced themselves to add their endeavours to strengthen the chorus, and they came in with very effective tenor and counter-tenor. The Archbishop had well nigh burst with impotent rage, and such perhaps might really have been the effect of his uncontrolled passion, if he had not found meet expression for it in the screaming energy of his cries. The fisherman's song was a characteristic one, and his Excellency's bellowing, filling up every chasm in the concert, sometimes jumped not inaptly with the chorus.

Full swells the sail like a bended bow,
And my Cachemarin makes an arrow's flight slow;
Over the waves as the keel rises high,
Who rides in his coach half so happy as I?
No prince in his palace, no priest in his cell,
The delights of a fisherman's life can tell.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

When low the lateen and the net is cast,
And we idly recline by the unshipped mast,
How sound is the sleep that we fishermen take,
Or how pleasant the hopes that can keep us awake,
While our thoughts by the rippling around us are bent
On a net-breaking draught, and a market in Lent.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

Mother Church bids to fast and her children obey;
The butcher may starve and the sheep may go play;
But the fisherman fattens while other men fast,
And revels as long as the penances last:
In discharging from sin we are sure to be winners,
Then praised be Saint Mary that all men are sinners.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

The Mexican Incas their mines may keep;
The fisherman's toil makes a mine of the deep;

They dig the hard earth for their riches, while we
Throw a net for a pickaxe and dig the soft sea;
For coin the same metal they turn from the mould,
But we turn the fish into silver and gold.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

The sun kisses the ocean and bids her good day,
Then up with the net and the sail and away;
To home turns the prow, sinless Mary be bless'd,
To home turns the heart with no sorrow oppress'd:
At home into pleasure we turn all our gain,
And prais'd be the saints that that home is in Spain.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

A mass and a meal, and then welcome the dance,
Our spirits to brighten our joys to enhance;
The most nimble gitanos are happiest still
With us to be treading the gay Seguedille:
The castanet crackles, and twangs the guitar,
Then who half so happy as fishermen are.
Hallèo! Hallèo!

The Archbishop's latter cries, though issued with equal force as at

first, were less distinct from the extreme hoarseness of his voice. The rowers willingly gave up the vocal contest, and, indeed, now was no singing time with them, for the pursuing boat was within a short distance, and hailed them. The excessive brilliancy of the million stars, with which the deep blue dome of Heaven was studded, and which is far greater in the southern sky of Andalusia than in the pale azure of an English evening, enabled the sharp-sighted Churipample to recognise an old adversary of his in the boat which now approached, and he quickly communicated to Meneses the intelligence that it was a custom-house skiff, which had frequently before given chase to him and his companions. His presence of mind returned to Meneses the moment he discovered that the pursuers

had nothing to do with the Inquisition: he himself was in the habit of an alguazil of the Holy Tribunal, and trusting to the terror of that name, which, but the instant before, he had himself so powerfully experienced, he desired the oars to be shipped, and, boldly standing up in the boat, allowed the custom-house officers to come alongside.

Churipample wanted not the hint which Meneses was about to give; but, taking advantage of the cessation of labour in rowing, he stepped instantly forward, and not having time for the regular application of the gag, he seized Vargas's cloak, which lay upon the seat, and, throwing it over the Archbishop, he cast his whole weight upon the unhappy little man, taking good care that the heavier part of his body should rest upon his

Excellency's head, thereby running a great risk of committing both sacrilege and murder, by suffocating an archbishop.

Thinking it the part of a prudent general to anticipate the enemy's attack, Meneses undauntedly demanded of the officer in the boat—"Who is it that dares to interrupt an alguazil of the Holy Inquisition in the discharge of his office?"

The officer had a small lantern in his hand, with which he closely examined the person who spoke to him, and finding that his appearance perfectly agreed with his speech, he said, "Pass in peace, good brother; I should have thanked your Honour for saving me an hour's pulling at the oar, if you had given me this information a league nearer Seville."

"The officers of the Inquisition,"

replied Meneses, " zealously perform their duty, without supposing interruption possible from any Christian subject of the Catholic King."

The custom-house officer who had followed the boat, conceiving it to be engaged in a smuggling transaction, did not seem inclined to prolong his conversation when he had discovered his mistake, but wishing the alguazil good night, he pushed off and rowed away.

During this short conversation, a mortal feud occurred between Churipample and the Archbishop; the former of whom having irreverently and inconsiderately seated himself so as best to prevent the use of his Excellency's tongue, had quite forgotten that he had teeth also; which circumstance was, however, forcibly brought to his recollection by the infliction of

two deep incisions in his flesh; the intervention of a cloak, &c. being trifling obstacles when opposed to his Excellency's fury. Churipample jumped from his sitting posture and caught the prelate by the throat, before he had sufficiently recovered the exertion of the bite, to be able to resume his cries.

"Thou double-fanged dog of a priest," said the gitano in a low but determined voice, "the first word that comes out of your croaking throat shall be the last; I will strangle you in right earnest if you attempt to speak;" and his nails firmly set in the unhappy man's neck, sufficiently established the sincerity of the threat, and at the same time prevented the possibility of disobedience.

Whether the Archbishop would not have forfeited his life in payment for

the satisfaction of his malicious bite, if Churipample had not been weaponless, is a matter which I think very doubtful; as it was, he survived the throttling grasp of the gipsey; and his last hope having taken its departure in the custom-house boat, despairing and exhausted he almost unresistingly allowed himself to be more securely gagged than at first, and more comfortably than at last. The rowers took once more to the oars, and joyfully continued their course up the river.

In half an hour they arrived at the spot, where the liberality of Vargas, acting upon Churipample's associates, had provided means for their inland flight. Here they found a mule-litter, a similar machine to that described in the fifteenth chapter; with a conductor whose fidelity had been purchased at a price sufficiently high to warrant

them in trusting him, and two good horses provided with saddles and valises. These had been prepared to receive Vargas, Cornelia and Meneses, but it was necessary speedily to decide what was to be done with the Archbishop, upon which subject there were various opinions. Meneses represented, that to set him free at little more than a league and a half from Seville while he possessed a knowledge of the direction they took, would be absolute madness, and could only produce their certain detection; "and I need not," he continued, "take much trouble to point out the comforts of the cells in the palace of the Inquisition, nor the pleasures of martyrdom at the Quemadero*. The only

* The place where those delivered over for the execution of the law by the Inquisition, were publicly burnt in Seville.

safe plan is to leave his Excellency under the protection of our friend Churipample, with directions to let him loose this day week."

His Excellency groaned, and in agony of spirit flung himself from the sitting posture in which he had been placed upon the ground, when taken out of the boat. He rolled backwards and forwards with the impulse of ungovernable rage, while Churipample deliberately added his advice to that given by Meneses. "The only safety for any of us, gentlemen," said he, "will be in sending his reverence to tell his tale to the fishes; and as it's an ill wind that blows no good, the holy man will have the comfort of knowing, that when the fishes shall have devoured him, he will probably do more good to the bodies of the people at Seville in his death, than

he ever did to their souls in his life."

Here Vargas interfered, having before been occupied in placing Cornelia in the litter. He concurred with Meneses that it would be dangerous to themselves to let him free at that time, and Meneses could not but agree with him, when he pointed out the danger to the Archbishop of leaving him in Churipample's care, after the advice he had given, and the attempts he had made. "To leave him to the gitano," said Vargas, "would be downright parricide."

"To leave him to himself," replied Meneses, "would be downright suicide in us; I would not give a maravedi for the life of any one of us."

"The inference, then," said Vargas, "is clear, though dreadfully harassing. We must take him with us."

" How?" asked Meneses, " in the litter with Doña Cornelia?"

" Heaven forbid! In her present state she could not bear it; the sight of him would frighten her to death.

" We can get a rope and tether him to the pummel of one of our saddles—his Excellency must make use of his illustrious legs," said Meneses.

The extreme restlessness of the tortured man, his stifled sobs and flowing eyes found the way to Vargas's heart, when he allowed himself to imagine, that in the miserable creature before him, he beheld the source of his own being. " Loosen the bandage," said he to the muleteer," and the Archbishop at length recovered the power of uttering his complaints. He poured forth a torrent of words, dictated by an inconsistent combination of extreme rage, extreme fear, desire of re-

venge, and dreadful anticipation of becoming the victim of revenge himself. As these feelings agitated him in turn, his language altered from incoherent raving to abject supplication, and produced a contemptuous mirth in his hearers, except the unhappy Vargas, whose reflections upon the impossibility of honouring the being who gave him birth, and whose horror at being forced to consider him as a deadly and dastardly enemy, and to treat him as such, were contrasted to the mirth which Meneses endeavoured in vain to control.

After more time lost in consideration than was prudent, it was decided that the Archbishop should be tied upon one of the litter mules, and so proceed with the party. Against this decision the Prelate vehemently remonstrated, earnestly representing

that he had for some years disused the exercise of riding either on mule or horse; that the mule was unprovided with a saddle, and that he had never in his life ventured to ride any beast barebacked; but finding himself unattended to, he violently invoked a long list of saints, and swore by the sinless Mary that the very hottest places in purgatory should be the portion of the unmassed souls of his sacrilegious tormentors.

While he was passing capital sentence, ex cathedrâ, upon the condemned creatures before him, an arrangement was making as to the possibility of his Excellency's transportation, to which the mule driver seemed exceedingly averse. A pistole, however, overcame his objections; but it was a matter of much difficulty to decide which of the two mules was to have the ho-

nour of bearing the metropolitan of Seville.

" Old Patada here," said the muleteer, pointing to the leading mule, " does not always make his hind feet follow his front ones."

" What meanest thou?" asked Vargas.

" His fore-hoof an't shod with the same iron as his hind hoof; they have different inclinations; when one goes north, t'other sometimes flies south," answered the man.

" I have no time to unravel riddles," said Vargas, " make clear thy meaning."

Churipample saved him the trouble, by saying, " when that Andalucian speech is done into Castilian, it means that the brute kicks; and if his reverence here be perched upon its back, the Señora in the litter is like

enough to receive a visit from its heels."

The Archbishop here interposed, imploring, beseeching, entreating, cursing, raging, and calling down upon them all the horrors that his black heart could conceive, which, all unreguarded, were wasted upon the wind, while Meneses was inquiring into the capacity of the second mule for conveying this unwilling burden.

"Besatierra," said the muleteer, "hath but one fault; he liketh not his load; many a pigskin of good Catalonia hath he lain down upon, and squeezed out the juice as though it were an orange;—moreover, with a man burden he is apt to forget that he has got a curb in his mouth, and pulling won't make him remember it.

"Hispanicè, he runneth away," said Meneses to Vargas; "marry no fear

of that in the present case, for unless he be light enough to leap over the litter, we are as sure of him being impoled as though he were impaled." Then turning to the Archbishop, he continued: "We have no time for more of this—come, friend Pablo, if thou hast fears for thy neck, pronounce thy very shortest prayer, and prepare thee to ride in better company than thou hast been in of late, thou scab of the church."

The Archbishop set his teeth, and glared with his little sharp eyes like an untamed wild beast when first caught and put into his cage. His deep revenge could not condescend to express itself in any articulate sounds; it only made use of a strange sort of voice in the throat, which nevertheless gave a more horrible idea of the torturing rage that produced it,

than any human words could have conveyed. Churipample and the muleteer unceremoniously raised his Excellency from the ground, and placed him upon Besatierra, in spite of his womanish screams and priestlike anathemas. Having arranged him in the proper position, and fastened his ancles with cords to the poles of the litter upon which his feet rested, they proceeded to loosen his arms, and while the muleteer was actively employed in separating the knot which had been closely drawn together by his Excellency's incessant exertions, Churipample took occasion at once to vent his disappointment, and to gratify his revenge, by inflicting upon the Archbishop's fleshy thigh a gripe with an iron hand and long nails, equivalent, at the least, to the bite which the gitano had most insultingly re-

ceived. The piercing cry which this extorted from the Prelate, was echoed by a loud laugh from Churipample, who took his farewell, by exclaiming, " Aha! Señor Archbishop, *herir por los mismos filos*—diamond cut diamond." The mules, fretted by the preparation, and alarmed by the cry, wanted not their driver's well-known voice, but commenced their journey. The Archbishop, finding nothing to hold by (for the Andalucian mules are all shorn, mane as well as body), flung himself forward and heartily embraced the long neck of the animal. Churipample returned to the boat, and the cavaliers following the litter, proceeded at a long-stretching walk upon their midnight journey.

CHAPTER XXVI.

What is this I have lived to hear? That a Bishop, in a Christian assembly, should renounce his episcopal function, and cry mercy for his now abandoned calling!

BISHOP HALL.

THE personal fears, the insulted dignity, and the baffled revenge of the Archbishop of Seville, together produced a state of agony which not all the diabolical inventions which were practised in the hall of torture of the Inquisition, could have excited. He could scarcely believe that he was really awake, and actually in the situation that has been described. What! the Archbishop of Seville, the counsellor of the great Philip! the all but monarch of Andalucia, with a mitred

head, bearing a crosier and double cross, and armed with the flames of the Inquisition, and to be kidnapped, abused, bound, gagged, and absolutely disregarded; 'twas monstrous! Why did he venture in so undignified a manner alone, on such a fool's errand? The answer to this natural question was a scourge of scorpions' stings to the wretched man. Here lay the venom—that he had gone forth so unguardedly, enticed by an overgreediness of sweet revenge, by indulging which he had not only been foiled in his object, but had himself become exposed to be a victim to the same direful passion of revenge which raged within his own bosom. To attempt to convey any idea of this man's feelings would be as vain as it must be to describe the horrors of the everlasting penal fire. What we are incapable of

experiencing we are incapable of fully comprehending, and I am sure, therefore, that none of my readers could estimate the Archbishop's state of mind, even if I could afford them the most exact description of it.

It would be almost equally difficult to follow the miserable current of Vargas's thoughts, which a long habit of melancholy led more easily into the train of wretchedness that readily offered itself, to overwhelm the more joyful suggestions of hope and love. Could the dreadful creature with whom their flight was so unexpectedly burdened, could he be his parent? He felt inclined to answer it is impossible! But the Marquis of Bohorquia had so confidently assured him that no doubt remained in his own mind but that such was the case, that poor Vargas had hardly a loop-hole of hope to

admit a ray of light upon the desolate darkness of the idea.

The steady pace at which they travelled enabled them to pass over several leagues during the short space of an August night. Their track lay up the course of the little river Huelba, which falls into the Guadalquivir, a short distance from the spot where they had debarked. At first their path lay through vineyards, orange groves, and olive woods; but as they receded from the circle within which the influence of a populous city was more distinctly visible, the way became woody, less cultivated, and more indicative of their approach to the Sierra Morena. They continued their progress without intermission, taking always the current of the Huelba for their line of direction, and never allowing themselves to lose the petulant dashing of its fretted

waters, intercepted in their rapid descent by the many masses of rock which turned them out of their way, or by the many deep chasms which they were detained to fill up. This constant sound was scarcely interrupted by human language as the fugitive party travelled onwards, unless the interjectional conversation which passed between the driver and his mules should be considered to come under that denomination, or unless the occasional exclamations, sobs, or groans of Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, should be classed as human language.

Day dawned, and the splendid stream of light from the east was poured upon nature in one of her simplest and most imposing garbs. Immense mountains of rock lay before them, heap after heap, promiscuously huddled together as they were left by the

all convulsing deluge with bare and frowning heads, but variously tinted at their bases, and far upon their bosoms, by the different clothing of verdure which had found congenial soil. Sometimes comparative patches of plain displayed the gayer dress of meadow green, whilst occasionally the sober hue of the chesnut and oak was diversified with the silvery shade produced by a tract of olive wood.

The river Huelba, upon the right bank of which they still continued, had now assumed rather the character of a mountain torrent, than that of a river, which, near its confluence with the Guadalquivir, it might well have merited. Its banks were high and precipitous; its waters often overleapt sudden declivities, or glided down descents of perceptible inclination. The path, or rather track

which they followed was evidently but rarely trodden by human foot, and it wound of necessity so near to the brink of the torrent's bank, that the Archbishop was exceedingly alarmed, and not altogether without reason, considering the swinging motion which the unwieldy vehicle to which he was bound had acquired.

His fears were, however, quieted for a season, by the descent of the pathway into a small dell, or wooded nook in the uneven ground, over which they travelled; and, as this descent brought them almost to the level of the stream, and afforded not only shelter but a pleasant green plot of ground, a halt was ordered, and the party prepared to break their fast upon this spot, and to rest themselves and their cattle here for a while. The Archbishop was unbound, the

mules were unlittered, the horses were unsaddled, and good entertainment both for man and beast, with which the litter had been furnished, was spread. The quadrupeds were tethered to trees within the shade of the wood, where also, after he had served the animals, the driver chose a spot for himself; and Vargas and Meneses, unwilling either to shock the sight of Cornelia in her delicate state, or to disturb the happiness of the party, by the presence of the Archbishop, commanded the muleteer to invite his Excellency to partake of his repast, and, at the same time, desired him to act as sentinel over the prisoner.

The conversation of the trio was not exceedingly fluent, nor exceedingly merry. Neither Vargas nor Cornelia were yet in a state fully to

indulge in the happiness of their situation. Cornelia was too weak and too much shaken in body by what she had suffered; and Vargas's fate, all joyful as it was in some important particulars, had still a chilling curse annexed to it that prevented the possibility of his enjoying those blessings which he experienced. Meneses alone was happy. The daring of the adventure had excitements for him which all his consideration for the weak nerves of Cornelia, and all the contagious sadness of the brow of Vargas, were insufficient entirely to counteract.

If the breakfast of the trio was silent, not to say unsocial, that of the ill-assorted duet was absolutely discordant. While the muleteer was serving his animals, the hapless Prelate was lying at his length on the

grass, inwardly cursing his hard fate, and indulging his imagination in the wantonness of revenge, by planning tortures hitherto unimagined, which he wanted but the power to inflict upon his kidnappers. Juan Chaco, having provided for his beasts, now seated himself by the groaning Archbishop, and kindly produced the contents of his wallet, which consisted of a large sausage, several onions, some bread, and a dozen strings of *pinones*, or pine kernels, which the idle boys in Spain extract from their shells and string in rows like necklaces, of which rows they sell eight or ten for an ochavo. This luxurious meal being spread, Juan delayed not to invite his companion, or prisoner, to partake of it.

"Come friend," said he; "to midnight work a ready meal, says the

proverb, and many an Hidalgo of known fathers and field * will breakfast to-day without a Seville sausage. Here," holding out the length of the savory preparation with his knife and thumb, ready to separate about six inches from it.

" Hold thy insolent tongue, thou baseborn serf," said the Archbishop.

" By the bones of St. Jerome, but I have a mind to cut out thy tongue, thou lying slave," replied Juan: who art thou to *thou* me, and taunt me as baseborn? — baseborn, forsooth — I whose fathers have held letters of honour,† as was proved by my grandfather when he was sentenced to death, and lost his head like a gentleman, instead of being hung up by the neck like a

* Hidalgo de casa y solar conocido.

† Cartas de merced, raising the persons who held them and their heirs to the rank of hidalgos.

slave. An my blood were not cooler as it is gentler than thine, my knife would have made acquaintance with thy heart for thy lie:—but live, dog, till thou art starved to death, for breakfast of mine thou shalt have none."

This speech, the boldest that had ever been addressed to his Illustrious Excellency in his whole life, forcibly convinced him how thoroughly he was in the power of the speaker; and as the most dastardly cowardice generally accompanies the most insolent pride, the Archbishop altered his former overbearing tone, to one something more tolerable to the ears of the grandson of a man who had exerted the privilege of being beheaded in preference to being hanged.

"Do you know, good friend, who

it is that stands before you?" This was pronounced interrogatively only, without any mixture of menace in the voice.

The muleteer did not know who his companion was, and had troubled himself no further concerning him than to know certainly that he was a little fat man, and to suppose probably that he was an enemy of those who had hired him: he therefore replied—"I tell you what I know, and that's all too much, that you're a heavier burden for a beast than five fanegas of barley, and a duller beast to drive than any that are fourfooted."

The unhappy man, finding him ignorant of his high dignity, had no doubt of the imposing effect which the knowledge of it would produce; and wishing to excite compassion as

well as astonishment, he whimpered, in a voice which he meant to be affecting, "I am an unfortunate archbishop—"

The Prelate, intending to go to the extreme of the pathetic, overstepped his mark, and unfortunately got into the extreme of the ludicrous, which he quickly discovered by the burst of broad laughter which he excited in the mule-driver; who was so tickled with the incongruity in the idea of the little man before him being the awful creature who was occasionally seen in the cathedral upon grand occasions, under the stiff mass of embroidery and the towering mitre, that he gave the rein to his mirth and laughed heartily. The Archbishop, who expected nothing less than to see the poor man prostrate before him, was exceedingly nettled, and seizing hold

of the first thing that he could lay his hand upon, he was about to hurl it at the mule-driver, when his attention was distracted by observing that he held the very Seville sausage from which Juan Chaco had severed the portion that he had been devouring. The Archbishop had been accustomed to breakfast upon the finest fruits and most savoury viands, all of which he relished exceedingly; but an internal craving which he experienced at the moment, suggested the prudent opinion that a Seville sausage was a very good thing when nothing better was to be had; and, under the influence of this suggestion, he acted like Major Macpherson in a situation somewhat similar; who, having grasped a razor with a deadly purpose, wisely diverted the impulse, and applied it

to a beneficial end.* In a like manner the prelate, having intended to hurl a thunderbolt at the devoted head of the muleteer, and finding his weapon assume the goodly shape of a Seville sausage, very sensibly applied it in a more legitimate manner, and, postponing his anger, he commenced his breakfast.

As soon as his laughter would let him, honest Juan continued his meal, saying, "I did say that you should not have any breakfast of mine, but thou hast secured it in spite of me. If I had meant to keep my word, I should have pocketed my sausage. The art in swimming is to know how to take care of your clothes.† Thou

* So instead of his throat he cut his corns.
False Alarms, or my Cousin.

† La gala de nadar es saber guardar la ropa.

art a merry rogue and shall have thy meal."

The Archbishop sullenly continued his breakfast without deigning to answer the peasant, who, nevertheless, did not fail to season the repast with good natured bantering upon the high and dignified title that his companion had chosen to assume. He often addressed his Excellency interrogatively, but to no purpose; in spite of his many attempts at conversation it was absolutely monological.

"Poor fellow," said he: "an archbishop in distress—ha! ha! ha! Would nothing less than an archbishopric suit your most Illustrious Excellency? Prior of a convent now might have satisfied a moderate madman. How does your Excellency like your archiepiscopal breakfast?"

No reply.

" I did not like to astonish you, good Archbishop, at first; and, perhaps, if you had not been so candidly communicative with *me,* I might have allowed you to remain ignorant of the high honour which has befallen *you*; but I can't keep silence now in gratitude: keep the secret, but I am the Pope in disguise—St. Peter on a pilgrimage, come to see how the Archbishops of Spain do their duty; and as I heard that they sometimes travelled incognito, I bethought me, diamond cut diamond, I'll put on a mask to find them a masking; set a thief to catch a thief; no offence to your Excellency; set a Pope to find out an Archbishop, ha! ha! ha!

The Archbishop looked up at the sacrilegious jester with extreme astonishment.

"Perhaps your pious Illustrissimo is upon penance for the sins of your diocese—taken prisoner by the infidels—bound to a litter and suffering demi-martyrdom by a mad mule—defunct of fright and brought to life again by a Seville sausage. That's a miracle,—a notable miracle, or Saint Isidor is no saint—well deserving canonization—and thou shalt have it too, or I'm no Pope. Make haste and die, and I'll send your Excellency to Heaven upon the back of a bull. Saint—what's your name Archobispillito?"

The muleteer Pope filled up the pause in his jest with his laughter.

"Good brother Archey," he resumed, "your singular piety shall not go unrewarded even in this world. Would your Excellency like a cardinal's cap? Here's one very much at

your service," holding out his own broad-brimmed hat.

The Archbishop, bursting with rage, caught hold of the proffered hat with the intention of casting it at the insolent muleteer. The rising fury apparent in his countenance was a warning to Juan, who tightened his grasp, and the Prelate meeting a resistance in the hat for which he was not prepared, was himself thrown out off his balance by the check he received, and falling upon his face with a strong impulse, rolled down the little declivity upon which they had been sitting, roaring aloud as he rolled; while the muleteer, excited to the extreme of mirth by this climax of the jest, held his sides and shouted forth his boisterous satisfaction.

This inconsistent combination of sounds attracted the attention of the

more serious party, and Meneses hastened to the spot from whence they proceeded. He found the Archbishop lying at the bottom of the little rising ground, roaring with rage, and the muleteer sitting at the top of it, roaring with laughter.

"What's the matter?" was his natural question.

"Oh! Señor Alguazil," said Juan, "the merriest matter that ever was devised in cunning brain: yon fat little gentleman is nothing more or less than an unfortunate archbishop! ha! ha! ha! by St. Dominic, the poor man publishes himself for such, ha! ha! ha!"

This was quite irresistible to Meneses, who joined heartily in the muleteer's mirth. After some time he attempted to look grave, and said, "This is profane jesting."

"Profane!" rejoined the muleteer, "'tis very sacrilege, I say; the impious fellow takes me for the Pope, and asks me for a cardinal's cap and canonization. Oh! tis monstrous, ha! ha! ha!"

Meneses with the greatest difficulty smoothed his features into apparent austerity, and taking up the tone as he continued to wear the dress of the Holy Office, he roughly shook the Archbishop by the cape of his cloak, right happy at an opportunity of paying off something of what he had suffered in Seville. "Infidel wretch!" said he; "abominable heretic! ill should I discharge the duty of my office if I allowed such sacrilege to pass with impunity. You shall to the Inquisition, wretch!"

The Archbishop was electrified with astonishment. "Carretero, or

devil," said he, "by what infernal possession darest thou venture upon such inconceivable audacity?"——

"Hold thy tongue, wretch," said Meneses, giving him a powerful shake; "hold thy tongue until thou enterest the hall of torture in the palace of the Inquisition. Know'st thou such a place? Thou shalt there have a pleasanter ride on the wooden horse than thou hadst last night on the tumble-down mule. The funnell and the pulley too. And then you shall be in one of those pleasant pits —mark me—on the lower range, until the next auto de fé sweep all the holes and corners of the Inquisition, not excepting your sanctuary—d'ye mark me?" and he repeated his paralyzing shake.

The unusual oscillations of the Archbishop's head co-operated with

the unimaginable matter of the alguazil's discourse to make his brain dizzy, and he remained with a fixed gaze and open mouth, mute and immoveable, when Meneses freed him from his grasp. The good-natured muleteer, who had treated the matter altogether as a jest, was sorry to see the poor lunatic, as he really considered him, so roughly handled and so fearfully menaced, particularly by so terrible a person as an alguazil of the Holy Office was wont to be. He attempted to intercede for him by saying, "The unhappy man is beside himself, so please you; there is no harm in him; an he considered himself a saint, so much the happier he, and none the worse we. It is to be hoped that lunacy is not an Inquisition crime."

"A man must not, even in mad-

ness, jest with sacred things," said Meneses. " Make ready the litter and let us away. If the wretch dare to jest again with holy titles I'll tie him under the mule's belly, as a sort of apprenticeship for riding the wooden horse."

The Archbishop did not recover the use of his speech during the preparations for their further progress; and, when they were completed, he allowed himself unresistingly to be perched upon the back of Besatierra. The whole party proceeded as before.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Now by Jove's mind-born maid, I did forefeel
The falsehood of this tale. Nature were changed
If that pure stream had flow'd from yon foul
source.
If this were so, look when the she-wolf whelps,
And hope to find a litter of young lambs.
ARISTOMENES; A TRAGEDY.

IT is hardly possible to conceive that any one should pass over the magnificent skirts of the Sierra Morena without casting a thought upon the many beautiful and sublime combinations of objects with which they abound; and yet not one of the persons that composed the cavalcade mentioned in the last chapter were in the slightest degree alive to the magic of the scene. All traces of cultivation, all appearance indeed of human

life, had vanished from the prospect. Vast headlands, some bare, some covered, with stately forests, and all joined to one prodigious wall of mountain which arose to circumscribe the horizon, presented themselves on every side. The whole gave the idea of a spot of the primeval world, as yet unmarked by the presence of man.

Of the party travelling onward, Cornelia, Vargas, and the Archbishop, had matter for contemplation too serious and too engrossing to allow of the admission of one thought upon any other subject. Meneses was too much overjoyed at the happy result of his past schemes and hard labour —too much delighted at the unexpected opportunity of punishing the Archbishop, and too much amused with a plan which he was forming to punish him still further: while Juan

Chaco was entirely occupied with reflections upon the titulating insanity of his archiepiscopal prisoner.

A long morning's journey brought them nearly to the source of the Huelba, in the line of which they had hitherto continued their route. Their appetites required refreshment, and the increasing power of the sun began to produce its effect upon their eyelids, and to put them in mind that they had passed a sleepless night. Their mid-day repast was soon despatched, and a spot was chosen affording the shade of natural bowers, in which they severally composed themselves for the siesta. In a very few minutes Cornelia, Meneses, and the muleteer were in a deep slumber. Vargas too appeared to sleep, and so did the Archbishop; but the rest of the former was scarcely forgetfulness;

it was a light stupor produced by fatigue; while the latter did not sleep at all; his mind was at work upon the possible means of escaping from the most unexpected and unimaginable net into which he had fallen.

The unrefreshing sleep of Vargas was very shortly broken by the rustling of the leaves near him. He started upon his feet, and his hand instinctively grasped his sword; but he let go the weapon upon seeing the Archbishop approach. Vargas had studiously avoided all conference with him hitherto, and he now shrunk back when he found that he was about to address him.

"Vargas," said the Archbishop, "I am in your power. How far you mean to carry your sacrilegious daring I know not: albeit to the end—even unto my death: but learn

that I possess an important secret concerning you. If you free me, you may know it—if you retain me your prisoner and ill treat me, you never shall."

"You would tell me," replied Vargas, endeavouring to curb his language and bearing within the limits of respect, "that I am *not* the son of the Marquis de Bohorquia, that you may pain me now as much by that information as you once did by leading me to suppose that I *was* his son."

"'Twas thy own folly made thee believe it, child, not me. I never said thou wert his son. If thy conscience put a false face upon harmless words, charge me not with the lie; but rather crave my pardon for mixing poison with my wholesome discourse. I tell thee now thou art *not* his son."

"I know it, Sir," said Vargas,

scarcely attempting to hide his emotion; "I have long known it, and"——

"Thou liest! thou couldst not know it," rejoined the Archbishop hastily, and giving way to his characteristic irritability; "there is only one living creature knows who thou art but myself." But here the remembrance that there was one other person naturally suggested the possibility that from him the information might have been derived: he was thrown off his guard, and he added, "Have you been at Alange? have you seen Father Lawrence?"

An indistinct feeling of hope sprang to the mind of Vargas at hearing these questions; the restraint which he imposed upon his resentment and disgust was less powerful in proportion, and his brow lowered with more indignation as he replied—"I *have*

been at Alange, and have conversed with Father Lawrence."

"And the fool told you of your birth! accursed idiot. The fiends seize him for not casting you more surely from that horrid height and dashing you to atoms. May the fiend let him fall himself from the same spot, and with a firmer impulse than his trembling hand gave to thee. Wretch! fool! madman! that I was to interfere to save you—oh! oh!" and the infuriated man stamped upon the ground, and beat his forehead in a paroxysm of rage.

Vargas had heard enough. The penance of Father Lawrence, and the confession of the Marchioness of Montemolin, both of which he had witnessed in so providential, (a Catholic would have said so miraculous a manner,) were instantly present to his mind,

and one glance at the idea which they created, not only set him free from all the miserable feelings with which his mind had been tortured, but opened to him a prospect of which he before had no conception. The effect of this extraordinary combination was instantaneous; he burst into a flood of tears—tears such as he had never before shed—tears of unparalleled happiness, which flowed on for some time accompanied by almost hysterical sobs.

The continuation of the Archbishop's furious and ungoverned imprecations at length drew his attention, diverting the current of his feelings, but, at the same time, increasing their violence. All the indignation and abhorrence with which he regarded the conduct of that wicked man now rose up in his heart. He

had been using every exertion that he was capable of to overcome, or at least to restrain these feelings within bounds, when he conceived that the object who excited them was his own father, and they now received a greater force from the sudden freedom which they had acquired. At that moment they were uncontrolable. Vargas did not attempt to control them, but springing upon the Prelate as he was croaking forth his curses, he seized him by the throat, and shook him with all his strength.

"Thou fell wretch!" said he, "thou very fiend incarnate! now could I shake thy black soul out of thy bloated body—know, demon, that father Lawrence told me nothing; it is thou thyself hast told me that I was the child that he cast from the precipice; aye, and thou shalt tell me more, or

by heaven, I swear, that I will send thy soul a more dreadful journey than he sought to send my body."

Throwing him violently upon the ground, Vargas drew his sword, and placing it at his throat, kneeled upon his body in such a manner, as prevented his rising.

"Speak, villain!" said he, "how came I into thy possession?—speak or die!"

"I will, if you will let me—I can't—rise, I say—put up thy sword—Ave Maria—Oh!"

"Death is at thy very throat, an thou speakest not," said Vargas.

"I will, I will! Oh, San Isidor! San Gregorio!"

"Speak, and quickly; how cam'st thou by me?"

"Lawrence gave thee to me," said the Archbishop, groaning and half choaking.

"Why?" said Vargas, "and how?"

"*Sub sigillo confessionis;* — thou would'st not break the sacred seal of confession, impious man! Let me go; Oh, San Pablo!

"Thou shalt break the seal of confession, or I will break thy neck, wretch," said Vargas, and his manner gave good earnest of the sincerity of his intention.

"He would have murdered thee, but thou wert saved by the devil thy father, I trow—the holy saints protect me!"

"And who *am* I?" said Vargas, somewhat relaxing the severity of his action and manner.

"Nay! ask that of Lawrence," said the Archbishop, "and in the mean time let me go."

"Thou hast said enough, villain!" replied Vargas, rising and sheathing

his sword, " I know who I am, but thou shalt write what thou hast said with all due form and circumstance of avouching. What! ho! Cornelia, my own Cornelia! arise—hearken—participate in my happiness. Yon vile wretch is not my father," said he, addressing his wife and Meneses as they both started from their bower beds in alarm.

" I not his father!" repeated the Prelate; " I! the fellow's crazed."

" A fuddled man takes every body else to be drunk, so please your Excellency," said Juan Chaco, who also had been frightened from his slumbers and ran to the spot.

It occupied considerably more time to impart to Cornelia and Menéses the important information which Vargas had received, than he had taken to acquire it. To make them fully

understand all he knew and all he imagined, he was obliged to inform them minutely of almost all that had occurred to him from his arrival at Alange, until his escape from the palace of Montemolin, with all of which, whoever has read the preceding chapters, is already acquainted. This long narrative filled up the time of the siesta, and so powerfully interested Vargas and his audience, that the necessity for sleep was entirely superseded. Having fully explained the different links of his extraordinary history, he found that he had the strongest grounds for believing that he was, in reality, the heir apparent to the title of Velada, the elder brother of his poetical friend, Felix Davila, the nephew of his old host the Condé de Alange.

He had good authority to believe

that he had been delivered by father Lawrence, after an attempt upon his life, into the hands of the Archbishop of Seville, who had placed him to be brought up in the family of the Marquis de Bohorquia; he possessed authentic information that the legitimate son of the Marquis of Velada had been given to father Lawrence for destruction; one link in the evidence was wanting to produce positive proof that he was the identical child received by the monk from the Marchioness de Montemolin, and that link father Lawrence alone could supply. It was instantly determined that, almost at any hazard, it must be obtained, and, therefore, it was arranged that they should proceed directly to Alange.

"But what shall we do with the Archbishop?" said Vargas.

"Oh, pardon him, my love," said Cornelia, "pardon him the misery he has occasioned, in consideration of the joy he has been the means of discovering."

"Aye, and lend him the litter to go home to Seville, with all convenient speed," continued Meneses, "that he may forthwith despatch a whole flight of the eagles of the Inquisition to remedy his error in having once in his life been the means of producing happiness—a very excellent plan."

"Not so, Meneses," said Vargas, "though in Christian charity I join with dear Cornelia in pardoning him."

"Being thereunto more especially moved," added Meneses, "by the slight circumstance of his having helped you to a Marquisate."

"Since you will not give me cre-

dit for the unmixed Christian feeling," said Vargas, " I will acknowledge that I was more particularly moved thereunto by the lovely example of forgiveness which Cornelia has afforded me."

" Neither Christian feeling nor the lady's example have produced the same effect on me, for I do not forgive the old villain," said Meneses; " and I am further moved to this obduracy of resentment by an extreme anxiety which I have to put him to the torture."

" Heaven forbid!" cried Cornelia, " the very mention of that dreadful sound overpowers me."

" Patience, good lady—I mean not the torture with the mention of which we have, alas! been too much familiarised—but a new torture of my own invention, or rather imagined by ho-

nest Juan Chaco, and improved upon by your humble servant."

"What do you propose?" said Vargas.

"Juan Chaco thinks his Excellency mad," replied Meneses, "and, truly, 'tis strange if the man lose not his senses—let us seek out some honest wine-grower or farmer, who may have a cortijo* hereabouts, and by the power of a good bribe persuade him to receive an unfortunate ecclesiastic, who, having lost his senses, fancies himself the Archbishop of Seville. All his Excellency's rhetoric would pass for most excellent madness, and I think that we may hold him as secure for some time as we could desire."

"Your plan, Meneses," said Vargas, "would go nigh to justify the

* An isolated farm-house.

character you would leave with the poor wretch, for I scarce can conceive a torment more likely to irritate him to actual madness."

This scheme was digested in further conversation, and it was agreed that Meneses should repair to the town of Aracena, distant about three leagues from the spot where they were, for the purpose of procuring a fresh litter, as it was considered prudent not to trust Juan Chaco with the knowledge of their ultimate route; and that in his way he should endeavour to find a proper asylum for the mad Archbishop, while the rest of the party should remain by the banks of the Huelba, until his return.

This being decided, Meneses mounted his steed and set forth, leaving Vargas and Cornelia in the enjoyment of their new prospect of happiness,

and Juan Chaco apart in the enjoyment of tormenting his amusing prisoner; and as it is probable that it may be pleasanter to the reader to accompany Meneses than to remain with either of these couples, we will also set forward with him on the road to Aracena.

He had scarce travelled a short league, when, having ascended a high point of land, he discovered a pleasant village lying in a deep valley below him, which, according to the directions he had received from Chaco, he took to be the village of Zufre. It was a festival, and the villagers were assembled, in gala, upon a beautiful spot planted with orange and fig trees in abundance. Some of the men were engaged in the noble exercise of throwing the bar; while others had joined the female group, which, seated

upon a plat of grass, surrounded a majo, or gaily dressed peasant, who sounded the cords of the guitar in tolerable harmony with a large chorus of voices. The whole appearance was pleasing and picturesque; and, as Meneses took a bird's eye view of it, every feature in the scene was distinguishable. The athletic young men, having thrown aside their holiday doublets, were powerfully straining every muscle to outvie each other in the distance of their casts. Standing with their legs somewhat apart to obtain a firm base, they held a heavy iron bar, in the manner of a truncheon, at arms length, and wheeling it slowly at first backwards and forwards, they gradually attained the full force of their muscular power, and then sending the bar from their grasp, it spun perpendicularly in the air, and at

length pitched upright in the ground, at the distance of thirty or five and thirty yards from the thrower; who, taking another bar, now called into action all the muscles of the back, by stooping and giving the impetus by swinging it horizontally between his legs. This time the bar took at first the direction of an arrow's flight, but one end gradually descended in its course, and at last it pitched perpendicularly like the former, and most frequently within an inch of it. The steady progress of the heavy bar, and the shouting of applause or disapprobation as it exceeded or fell short of its distance, gave interest and life to the scene, and at the height at which Meneses stood, mingled in not unpleasant discord with the sounds which proceeded from the other group.

When the attention of Meneses fell upon this, he was pleased with their music, which came up to him softened and mellowed in its ascent; he listened attentively, and caught the following couplets of a song:

Time, when he once has bid adieu
He may not return with good-humour again;
The hours have wings, and they know it too,
To keep them from flying is all in vain.
Let us enjoy them while we may,
While the sun's shining let's make hay.
Sorrow too soon will come,
Don't let us think of gloom,
Stop till it comes, and be glad while we may.
Then lay your griefs upon the shelf,
Laugh away sorrow and dance away pain;
For Mirth is a little touchy elf,
And if he once cuts you he'll not come again.

Love is a rogue that, all the world knows,
Would cunningly swindle you out of your heart;
He talks of happiness under the rose,
But under the rose is the thorny part;

When he presents you his rosy gem,
Tear off the blossom, and leave the stem—
His wing and his kiss
Are the essence of bliss,
But as for his arrows—don't meddle with them.
Lay your griefs upon the shelf,
Laugh away sorrow and dance away pain;
For mirth is a little touchy elf,
And if he once cuts you he'll not come again.

Meneses soon attracted the attention of the people in the valley, and a sort of awful curiosity was excited by the appearance of an alguazil of the Holy Tribunal. Finding that the villagers laid aside their sport and their music, he descended, and met their respectful advances with a courtesy and condescension which, in some degree, diminished the fear that generally accompanied the presence of persons in his situation. He retained, however, the mysterious bearing which he had learnt to assume in his probation for the algua-

zilship, and which served to season the novelty of an arrival with the zest of an additional curiosity. He desired them to proceed in their sports and revels, but requested to know if the proprietor of a neighbouring cortijo, or solitary house, which he observed standing in an elevated situation at a short distance from the village, was amongst them. The eyes of every one turned towards an elderly looking hale man, of a cheerful countenance and respectable appearance, having his doublet and slashed breeches ornamented with more points than any of his fellows, and his hair tied into a long tail instead of being bound in a tresilla or bag of net work, which was the headgear of most of the peasants. Upon the call of Tio Andres he came forward with evident reluctance, which was by no means

diminished when Meneses said that he wished to have private converse with him.

They walked apart, and Meneses endeavoured to restore the good man's composure by assuring him that the object of this visit to Zufre had no reference to himself, and that he was in nowise implicated in any business obnoxious to the Inquisition. This assurance gave Tio Andres more confidence, and he listened with great attention to what the alguazil had to say.

"No, my good friend," repeated Meneses, "you have nothing to fear from the Holy Inquisition; on the contrary you have it in your power to render an important service to that sacred tribunal, by saving it from the necessity of inflicting punishment, or

at least imprisonment, where restraint only may be sufficient, and this is the object of my visit to you."

"I am unworthy of the favour of being employed by the Holy Inquisition," said Tio Andres; "and what may your worship wish me to do?"

"There is an unfortunate ecclesiastic," said Meneses, "who has become amenable to the Holy Inquisition; "but it has been discovered that the miserable man is lunatic."

"Unhappy man!" ejaculated Andres.

"His lunacy," continued Meneses, "shows itself in a very dreadful manner, totally unbecoming the humility of his reverend character. Ambition has made him insane. The poor man is fully persuaded that he is no less dignified a personage than an archbishop."

"San Gregorio protect us!" said Andres.

"Yes, an archbishop—the Archbishop of Seville—our most illustrious metropolitan, whose dignity is thereby much offended."

"Hapless innocent! would nothing less than an archbishopric serve him?"

"Most profane madness," continued Meneses; "most sinning conceit truly. But his most Illustrious Excellency, the real Archbishop, having charitably taken into consideration the man's infirmity, hath commissioned me not to resort to extreme measures, but to discover some comfortable and safe retreat in which to place him for the present, until he should return to his right mind and due station."

Tio Andres plainly saw how all this was to end; but not being over-

pleased at the prospect of a mad inmate in his cortijo, he was hopelessly endeavouring to find a means of escape from what he felt was inevitable. He was silent, therefore, and Meneses continued.

"I am charged to place him in a situation which is at once solitary and secure; and, moreover, I am charged to deposit one hundred pistoles with his host, as a donation from his Illustrious Excellency, promising that further communication shall be made at the forthcoming Nativity."

Having gone thus far in his plan, Meneses proceeded to inform Tio Andres that he had fixed upon the Cortijo of Zufre, as the asylum for the soi-disant Archbishop; and the good farmer was induced, by the softening circumstances of the archiepiscopal donation and promise, to relish,

or to appear to relish the selection of his residence. Meneses proceeded further to explain, that it not being fitting that such irreverent insanity should go loose in the world, to the scandal of all pious Christians, it had been judged proper to secure his self-constituted Excellency in the palace of the Inquisition, from whence he had been taken in a manner which, to his bewildered imagination, fully confirmed his wild fantasy, and that he now believed himself to have been kidnapped from his own palace by some extraordinary means which were quite inexplicable to any one not as mad as himself.

Tio Andres inquired whether he had ever any raving fits, and being assured that, except upon this particular subject, he was perfectly rational, he became not only reconciled

to the proposed plan, but pleased with it, and accordingly promised to pay every attention to the security and comfort of his prisoner. This being so easily arranged, Meneses dispatched one of the peasants to Aracena for a fresh litter, and returned himself to the banks of the Huelba to report to Vargas and Cornelia the success of his plan, and to conduct the miserable Archbishop to his rural prison.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The solicitor reads,
And, merit of merit!
Red wax and green ferret
Are fixed at the foot of the deeds!
Yamen beheld and shivered;
His finger and thumb were cramped;
His ear by the flea in't was bitten,
When he saw by the lawyer's clerk written,
Seal'd and deliver'd,
Being first duly stamped.

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

THE time of Meneses's absence had been passed by Vargas and Cornelia in the most delightful and interesting conversation of their whole lives. It was the first time their minds had been free from the weight of some overpowering misfortune, either present or anticipated, and their hearts were

filled with gratitude which they poured forth in ejaculations of most sincere thanksgiving. In looking back to the past, they were lost in wonder, at the extraordinary manner in which they had been conducted through such a labyrinth of intricate miseries; and the prospect which lay before them was scarcely less calculated to excite their astonishment and gratitude.

I will not attempt to explain in what manner these gratifying subjects were discussed by the two persons who were so deeply interested in them, but content myself with informing the reader, that when Meneses returned he found them in the happiest frame of mind imaginable; and that they declared that he could not have been absent half an hour, although the sun was now approaching

the horizon with almost perceptible rapidity. The other two persons of the party had been by no means so pleasantly occupied. Meneses upon setting forth had given special injunctions to Juan Chaco to keep a strict watch upon the archbishop; and the muleteer had not only obeyed his directions, but had given unrestrained licence to his tongue upon the amusing subject of his madness. This was insupportable torment to his Excellency, and the inexorable Juan Chaco amused himself at the wretched man's expense, during the whole time of Meneses absence; as some cruel or thoughtless children are amused with the torments of a summer beetle, when pierced with a pin and restrained in its flight by a piece of thread, it buzzes about, unable to escape from its torturer.

When Meneses had reported the

success which had attended his plan, the whole party set forward, being warned by the declining sun not to tarry in their journey. The Cortijo of Tio Andres gave them shelter for the night; the good farmer looked rather nervously at the madman whom he was to receive, and was relaxing into bad humour upon the subject, when the promised reward being produced and paid into his hands, again reconciled him to the burthen, which, being imposed by an officer of the Inquisition, he fancied that he could not avoid. The Archbishop not being at all aware of the fate that was preparing for him, preserved a sullen silence; and only indicated his smothered rage by the expression of his eye, which assumed an appearance highly corroborative of the statement which Meneses had made to Tio Andres.

The Archbishop was lodged by

himself in a small room, to which before day-break on the following morning Vargas and Meneses repaired. Vargas held in his hand a paper which he had prepared, containing a declaration that the infant which had been brought up by the Marquis of Borhorquia by the name of Bartolomé Vargas, was the same that the Archbishop had received from father Lawrence, and mentioning the particular time. To this paper he intended to procure the Archbishop's signature, and Meneses accompanied him as a witness. The unhappy man remained silent upon their entrance.

"I am not come to reproach you, wretched man," said Vargas, "for the evil you have done, nor the horrors you have willed to do to me and mine."

"I *am* come to reproach you, you most abominable stain upon human

nature," said Meneses; "for all your exquisite villany——"

Vargas prevented him from proceeding, saying "no, no, let us not wantonly fret the sore mind; read him this paper, and you," turning to the Archbishop, "attend, for you must affix your name and rubric to the matter which this gentleman is about to rehearse."

The prelate remained silent, and Meneses read aloud the declaration which Vargas had brought, and having finished, he placed pen and ink upon the table, and laid the paper before him, saying, "come, you bemitred Beelzebub, set your satanic sign manual to what I have now read.

The Archbishop looked at them both for some time in unutterable anger, and at length his rage was vented upon Meneses in the most hor-

rid imprecations, adding, "are you mad? have you gone wild, you idiot? do you not know that sooner or later my vengeance will reach you? Not a corner of all Spain but shall be searched for you—not a hole how dark soever but the light of the Inquisition shall shine in it to seek you, and then think but for an instant of what the Inquisition can do."

"True," answered Meneses, "it were indeed very madness to let such a demon loose again; sign this paper forthwith, and then prepare yourself to go back to your native hell," and he deliberately drew his sword and laid it upon the table.

The Archbishop trembled with either rage or fear, or a combination of both. He saw the absolute necessity of keeping within bounds, and he

endeavoured all in his power to suppress his passion. "What would you have me do, Señors? What if I do sign this paper? shall I be set free? shall I be sent forward to Seville?"

"I will make no conditions," said Vargas; "I ask nothing but that you should testify what you know to be the truth; and you shall sign the paper whether you like it or not."

"Make a virtue of necessity at once, old Satan," continued Meneses, "place here your archiepiscopal flourish and trust to our generosity as to what we will do with you."

"Trust to your generosity, Carretero! trust to the mercy of the wolf, when he has the lamb in his den."

"Your innocent Excellency acts lamb and I act wolf in that simile,—verily since you have assigned me the

character, I will do my best to act my part well," said Meneses: and he took his sword from off the table.

"Carretero," said the Archbishop, "do you remember with what special confidence and favour I regarded you at Seville? do you recollect——'

"Perfectly well," replied Meneses; "more particularly the friendly letter of recommendation of which your execrable Excellency made me the bearer to the General Inquisitor, kindly assigning me apartments in his palace. You very villain, to have the audacity to talk of the favour with which you regarded me. I give thee one minute to sign thy name or to epitomise all the sins of thy life in a general confession of all imaginable crimes: for off you shall set to the devil unanointed, and at full gallop."

And Meneses showed signs of suiting the action to the word.

The distracted Archbishop mechanically seized the pen, but, having by so doing allayed the impetuosity of Meneses, he paused before using it. "How may this be.—San Pablo protect me! Vargas——you desire me here to testify that I have saved your life. If this be so, can you—dare you thus persecute—thus sacrifice one who has saved you—ungrateful wretch—is it thus you pay me for rescuing you from that dizzy death at Alange!"

"Most plausible liar," answered Vargas, you saved me not. The hand of Heaven graciously pleased to save me, when the malignity of human nature had done its worst. In taking me from the friar, you were moved by no one feeling of compassion. But

had you saved my life a million times over, one thought of my wife would wipe out all the debt of gratitude in my heart. Base villain," continued Vargas, " sign that paper and quickly, for, mark me, if I lose my temper you lose your life;" and he drew his sword as he approached.

The prelate now felt himself in a truly perilous situation, with the sword of Vargas pointed at his body and that of Meneses suspended over his head, while the countenances of both indicated hearty goodwill to complete the action which either posture portended. Threatened on either side alike, his eye glanced from one to the other, while his fear applied to each corresponding ejaculations and petitions. At length being urged to the utmost by the menaces of both his assailants, he

put the pen to the paper, but, before tracing his signature he withdrew it and exclaimed—" my life! if I sign shall my life be safe?"

" Sign," said Meneses, " unconditionally sign," but Vargas replied, " keep thy life thou miserable wretch, so you but sign. I promise thee safety for thy life when thy signature is marked below this writing."

" But swear," said the prelate.

" I promise," replied Vargas.

" An oath, I must have an oath,—by ———."

" Blasphemous monster," said Meneses, " dare not to name that sacred name from those corrupted lips, lest the vengeance of Heaven impel my hand to send thee to answer for the outrage of thy Maker."

" I promise solemnly," said Vargas;

" but my promise shall wait but one minute for the condition—instantly sign or I hold it void."

The Archbishop delayed no longer, but tracing his signature with a trembling hand, he flung the pen from him, saying, " there—there—but, remember, assurance for my life."

" Calm your apprehensions, dastardly old man," said Vargas as he folded the paper and placed it in his bosom, " thy miserable life is not in danger, it is quite secure."

" And so is thy miserable person," continued Meneses, " as safe as if it were in the lower range of dungeons, in the palace of the Inquisition at Seville ; " and so saying, the two friends left the apartment totally disregarding his petitions and his imprecations, which were plentifully poured forth as they withdrew. A litter was at the

door of the Cortijo, and Cornelia was waiting, the horses were ready, the gentlemen were soon mounted, and the parting blessing being given and received by Tio Andres, the party set forward on their journey towards Alange.

The happiness which they all experienced, prevented them from being influenced by the consideration of the real danger of their situation, although it did not induce them to lay aside their prudence. They travelled rapidly and cautiously, but their conversation for some time was lively, and even merry when it was employed in tracing the probable scenes that might be the result of the Archbishop's present confinement; by degrees, however, it dwindled, as is not uncommon with travellers, and at length each became occupied with his own thoughts. Those of Vargas turned

principally upon the new prospect that was opened to him, which, although comparatively brilliant, was not unattended with subjects of regret. The offspring of a noble lineage, he could not establish his right without forcing his father to the acknowledgment of criminal conduct. The desertion of his unhappy mother, with which he must necessarily accuse his father, was a dreadful charge against him, and the more dreadful because preferred by a son. This train of thought which accorded too well with the melancholy of his mind, that from habit of long indulgence had become natural, was, however, diverted into another channel, shortly after sunrise, by the scenery around him which appeared familiar to him. Upon inquiring of the muleteer, he found that they were approaching the village of Mon-

temolin, and he began to recognise the vineyards and woods through which he had made his way, when flying from the palace in that place after the death of the Marchioness.

" Does our way lie through Montemolin ?" asked Vargas.

" No, Señor, the road winds to the right of the village, but I suppose your honours will make a halt and visit the palace."

" Why should we visit the palace ?" said Meneses.

" To see the room where the angel flew away with the soul of the Marquesa de Montemolin the other day : all the world goes to see it."

Both Vargas and Meneses made more particular inquiries upon this subject, and the muleteer not unwilling to indulge his professional loquacity, proceeded to relate the legend

of the miraculous assumption of the Marchioness's soul.

" No doubt your worships have heard of the fame of the Marquesa de Montemolin, a very saint in petticoats; piety personified and virtue incarnate. To tell you all the good she did would take us while we travelled to Madrid, and her father confessor solemnly avouches that he never heard her confess a sin in his life. She lived, gentlemen, bright and pure like the sun; but the sun must set, and man must die, and so her Excellency's time came. " *Ave Maria purissima!*" and the muleteer crossed himself.

Vargas and Meneses to whom the former had imparted his adventure at Montemolin, interchanged significant glances, and the muleteer proceeded in his story.

" When the Señora Marquesa found

herself dying, she dispatched a messenger to Father Nicholas of the Point, as they call him here in Andalusia.

The muleteer paused; but as neither Vargas nor Meneses seemed able to profess their acquaintance with the saint, nor willing to acknowledge their ignorance of so great a personage, the pause was filled up by no reply: and as the peasant interpreted silence to indicate want of information, he proceeded to introduce Father Nicholas as an episode.

As the muleteer diverged considerably from the main story, in which alone his auditors were interested, they both endeavoured to bring back the narrative to its original current; this they had some difficulty in accomplishing, but at length, having sufficiently commented upon the sanc-

tified character of Father, or Saint Nicholas of the Point, he returned to the no less sainted Marchioness.

" Well, Señors, this was the holy man for whom she sent to give her extreme unction, being too good to be anointed by less holy hands, and, as it proved in the end, even too good for Father Nicholas; for at day-break the next morning, after she had sent off the messenger—(now he could not have reached Saint Nicholas's cell by that time)—behold an angel, in the habit of a Dominican Friar, approached the avenue to the village—yonder you can see the tops of the trees—his countenance was all of the colour of light, and rays surrounded it like the sun. A crowd of people rushed from the village to receive the angel. At first they fell down upon their faces before him, and then getting up, they

wanted to bear him to the palace; but, spreading a vast pair of white wings from under his frock, he flew over all their heads, slowly, however, as if to give them an opportunity of adoring his angelship."

"His angelship was amazingly condescending," said Vargas, who could scarcely smother his laughter.

"Very condescending indeed," replied the muleteer; "they say that all your real saints and heavenly people are. Into the apartment of the Marquesa he went, and immediately all the people heard the most beautiful music—sweeter, as the folk say, than fifty guitars playing seguidillas."

"What did the angels play seguidillas?" asked Meneses.

"Not having been present," replied the muleteer, "I can't answer for what they played."

" But what happened when the angel went into the Marquesa's apartment?" said Vargas.

" Nobody knows," answered the muleteer, " but the people waited a long time, until Father Nicholas of the Point arrived at the palace, when the holy man and the curate of the village went into the apartment, and found that the angel had flown away with the soul of the Marquesa, for there lay the sainted Señora's corpse, and also the mortal habit that the angel had chosen to put on—I mean the Dominican habit which he wore, and which is now placed amongst the sacred relics in the church at Montemolin."

Neither Vargas nor Meneses could any longer refrain from bursting into laughter, which they did so heartily that the muleteer began to take their

mirth grievously in dudgeon; as not knowing distinctly the cause of it, he applied it indefinitely to himself.

"Your worships' merriment is out of time, methinks: if it spring from my tale it is unseemly; if from my talk it is uncourteous."

"From neither, I do assure you, friend," said Meneses.

"By the life of Saint Nicholas you have nothing to do but to go into the village here, and every man you meet will avouch you the story from his own knowledge;" and having come to the spot where the road up the avenue branched off from that on which they were travelling, he was about to turn his mules to Montemolin, when he was prevented by the merry cavalleros: it was with difficulty that they succeeded in keeping on the direct road, so intent was the

muleteer upon producing corroborative evidence of the truth of his story. Being at length forced to give up his point, he went grumbling on, alternately speaking aloud in defence of his veracity, and muttering less argumentative matter between his teeth.

Travelling with great rapidity, avoiding the large towns, and always taking the most direct track they could find, the evening sun found them upon the plain of Alange, near the spot where Vargas and Meneses had met for the first time.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Hope, long unfelt till now,
Rose in his heart reviving, and a smile
Dawn'd in his brightening countenance, the while
He gazed on him with wonder and delight.
SOUTHEY.

No doubt the meeting between Vargas and Meneses, alluded to at the end of the last chapter, will be remembered by the reader—no doubt, also, he will recollect that upon that occasion Vargas was the worse by a wound, and Meneses by a mule. The remembrance of his wound hardly crossed the mind of Vargas, while the idea of his mule immediately returned to that of Meneses. Cornelia, in the mean time, was fully occupied in dwelling upon the mira-

culous, or providential preservation of her husband's life while an infant, and her imagination revelled in all the romantic legends which were naturally linked in that chain of ideas.

As they journeyed over the plain, with the vast land-wave of Alange, as it has been called, lying immediately before them, a person in gala dress, which, gay as a May morning, bespoke him of the higher order of peasants, issued from the Venta, mounted upon a fine pacing mule. Upon a nearer approach Vargas recognised Master Rock, and Meneses recognised his mule.

Meneses advanced to meet the innkeeper — he still continued to wear his inquisitorial apparel, and Master Rock, who, ever since the events detailed in the fifteenth chapter, had been seized by a nervous trepidation when-

ever any thing belonging to the Inquisition approached him, was more particularly affected upon this occasion as there was a confused idea of recognition in his brain upon sight of the alguazil. This may be accounted for by remembering that although Master Rock had but once seen the alguazil as such, yet it was under circumstances very likely to leave a deep impression; and, further, Master Rock had, in some degree, become familiarized to the features of Meneses in his capacity of Cavallero.

When Meneses had come tolerably near to Master Rock, the latter checked his mule, and both beast and rider pricked up their ears at the approaching object with great similarity of action. Upon the first impulse, Master Rock turned round, and retook his way to the venta, not with

the speed of a fugitive, but with the pace of one who wishes to fly without exciting suspicion of his intent.

The jennet of Meneses, obedient to the spur, bounded forward and speedily placed him by the side of the innkeeper, who endeavoured at a salutation, which, in the delivery, took the form of an invocation to his saint; while at the same time his hand, which was raised to doff his hat, acted under the more natural impulse, and made the sign of the cross.

"Health and long life—Santiago protect us! Welcome to your worship—*Ave Maria purissima!*"

"Good day, Master Rock," replied Meneses; "do you remember me?"

"Aye, by St. James of the sword, and I delivered your worship's before you were a league from Alange."

"My what, man?" said Meneses, who had forgotten the adventures at the venta, while thinking of his mule.

"Your worship's sword, letter and all," resumed Master Rock; "for I saw the sword drawn, and the letter read."

"I know you did, for, if you had not, you would have been comfortably quartered in the Inquisition, and indulged with the weekly exercise of racking to keep you in health."

"The saints in Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Master Rock; "my bones ache at the very thoughts of it."

"Did you ever ride the wooden horse, Master Rock?"

Such a question from an officer of the Inquisition, had something in it quite appalling to Master Rock, who knew that these sort of gentlemen never played with their tools, and

scarcely ever talked of such things but in an ominous manner; he cast a terrified look upon the alguazil, who continued, "I should judge that you had by the masterly manner in which you bestride that mule; is it thine own?"

Master Rock's gaze of terror was turned into one of uncertainty; the ready reply upon his lip was an affirmative, but there was an indefinite connexion in his mind between the alguazil and the owner of the mule, which left him at fault. A repetition of the question forced him to answer, and, considering that he certainly could not gain by acknowledging that he had no right to the mule, and that he possibly might by declaring that he had, he hazarded the lie; but having said, "yes, Señor," he fell into the usual folly of

liars, and attempted to support his assertion by entering into particulars.

"This mule, Señor, was once the property of one of the first cavalleros in Spain; Don Hilario, Rodrigo, Isidro, Alvaro, Ponce, Domingo de Leon y Lardizabel; a gentleman of known generosity, of which this mule betokeneth not a little, seeing that, for my poor sevices in lodging and refreshing him and his suite, over and above the account of charges which was duly paid, he said, as I held his stirrup at the door, "Master Rock, if that be thy appellation, I should hold myself thy debtor if I departed without leaving thee a proof of my high approbation of thy zealous services:" then calling a groom, "surrender," says he, "to Master Rock the animal upon which thou ridest, in gift from me."

"I am well acquainted with that most generous gentleman, neither am I without tokens of his generosity; for he said to myself the other day, if ever you pass by Alange you have my free permission to claim and receive from a rogue of an innkeeper there, a superexcellent mule of mine, which ran away in a rencontre, and was left to be caught at leisure: knowest thou such a man, good Master Rock?"

"Of a surety thou dealest with the devil, Señor alguazil," replied the innkeeper; and, during the pause which followed this assertion, Vargas joined his friend Meneses. The manner of Vargas's departure from Alange will not have been forgotten by the reader, and he will find no difficulty in believing that father Cachafuto had taken care that the fame of his exorcism should not be lost for lack of commu-

nication; in reporting the tale he had omitted no circumstance which could aggravate the power of the evil spirit, that his own in conquering it might be the better appreciated. He had, therefore, fully established the belief that Vargas had been the actual residence of the identical enemy of mankind; and his appearance at the moment that Master Rock had asserted that Meneses had dealings with the devil, might have been considered as ample corroboration of the assertion, by wiser heads than that of the innkeeper.

By the sudden application of all means of excitement, ordinary and extraordinary, he set the mule off at a flying gallop; but whether he was actuated by the desire of saving his soul from the evil one, or his mule from its right owner, I cannot determine. Passing the venta, which was

too near to afford any hope of security, he proceeded on the road to the town of Alange, very much like a Spanish John Gilpin, a conception of which ludicrous personage might well have been given to a Spaniard by this apt translation of him; for the mule having acquired a stronger impetus than Master Rock either intended, or could restrain, he had much ado to maintain his seat; while the ribband which fastened his *tresilla*, or hair net, having slipped over his face, the net itself hung loose on his back, and left his long hair at liberty to fly about like the mane of a wild horse, giving an appearance to the innkeeper quite as ridiculous in the eyes of his countrymen as the trainband captain's bald pate could have been to the Edmonton cockneys.

It had been previously determined that Meneses and Cornelia should

proceed to the town of Alange, there to wait while Vargas visited father Lawrence, rather than attract attention by remaining at the venta; and, pursuing this plan, Meneses followed close upon the runaway Master Rock. Vargas dismounted and gave his horse to the muleteer, to whose care he consigned Cornelia in the litter, with instructions to proceed to Alange, where Meneses would wait for them, while he himself sought the cell of father Lawrence on foot.

Avoiding the principal path that led to the White Moor, he turned to the left by a track through the wood which conducted him to the southern extremity of the rock, and he soon found himself at the brink of the descent which has been already described when he paid his former visit to the friar. He descended; and after some

difficulty and risk, he reached the platform before the little chapel.

The chapel door was closed, as was also that of the father's habitation; but a low murmur within the latter led Vargas thither. Upon going up to the cell he distinctly heard the voice of father Lawrence rehearsing his breviary. Not being willing to break in upon his devotions, he waited some time at the door; but recollecting that they might very possibly outlive his patience, he knocked without further deliberation. Father Lawrence continued his occupation without heeding the interruption, although it was repeated, and at length Vargas unceremoniously opened the door and entered.

The hermit's cell was a small but commodious apartment, and not deficient in articles of necessary furniture; a table, some stools, several

books, culinary articles, and effigies of saints were distributed about the cell, and upon the walls. Father Lawrence himself was reciting his evening quantum of orisons in that indefinite posture which now habitually belongs to the rosary, in the hands of women and friars in Spain; that is to say, having commenced the task kneeling, he had become fatigued and sat down, making his legs, which remained in a horizontal position, relieve his knees, by bearing the weight of his body. This half-sitting half-kneeling posture conveniently quiets the conscience and relieves the muscles, and has therefore been adopted by all the indolently pious people in the Catholic country, who, being the majority, it has become characteristic.

"Heaven take you in its holy keeping, father," said Vargas.

The friar continued the *Pater* he

had begun, and Vargas waited until he had finished it; when, however, he found that the bead dropped and another *Pater* was instantly commenced, he repeated his salutation, adding, "I have present need of conference with you, good father."

But the inflexible devotion of father Lawrence was proof against all the urgency of Vargas's impatience, and he was forced reluctantly to watch the gradual rising of the sun's farewell rays upon the wall opposite to the window, in exact proportion with the falling of the friar's beads, until the last dropped as the glow of the rays dwindled into a glimmer. Vargas had by this time argued himself into patience, and when he saw the concluding crosses marked in successive sizes by the friar's thumb, first upon his forehead, then upon his face, and the last in-

cluding his breast, he said, " I wish to hold converse with you, reverend father, upon matter of much moment."

" Did'st think," replied father Lawrence, " that thy weighty concerns exceeded in importance the performance of my vow?"

" The matter in hand concerns your paternity almost as much as myself."

The friar, who had not at all recognized Vargas, now turned his keen gaze upon him, and an indistinct idea of recollection crossed his mind; " unfold thy business," at length he said, but without rising from the rosary posture before described.

Vargas proceeded—" The Marchioness of Montemolin is dead!"

The friar started upon his feet " and she sent thee to me? Died she, absolved, anointed?"

Vargas avoided giving a reply to either of these questions, aware that a theological controversy was likely to follow, which would lead him very far from the object of his visit; he therefore said "she has confessed her intention to destroy the Marquis of Velada's son—she has confessed it to that unhappy young man himself; he is aware of the providential circumstances of his preservation, and he requires from your justice an avouched testimony of the fact."

As Vargas said these words, the old man's emotion was very great. "Merciful powers! Great Santiago! Blessed St. Jerome! I praise thee—I bless thee that I am permitted to complete my atonement. I hail it as an omen that my prayers are heard, that my penance has not been in vain, but has

brought off the centuries of purgatory to which my soul had been sentenced;" then turning to Vargas, he exclaimed, "lead me to him—I will walk barefoot to meet him, though it were over an Arabian wilderness;" and stooping down, he proceeded to loosen his sandals.

"Your pilgrimage," said Vargas, "will not be long; I am he."

From the stooping position in which he was, father Lawrence flung himself prostrate before Vargas, accompanying his action with exclamations such as befitted the increased excitation which his enthusiastic mind received. After some time he gave way to Vargas's solicitations, and raised himself up, filled with a natural joy, accompanied, however, by a corrupt and overweening pride in the power

of his penances, to which he confidently attributed this earnest of his pardon in Heaven.

The cell was now become quite obscure, the rays of a young moon scarcely serving to save them from total darkness. Father Lawrence lighted a lamp, and instantly made use of it to gaze upon the countenance of Vargas, a circumstance which occasioned no slight perturbation to the latter, who remembered the character in which the friar had formerly dismissed him, and was not a little alarmed lest he should recognize him again as the enemy of mankind, and imagine that he was laying fresh snares for his soul. Fortunately, however, in the present instance, there was no predisposition to the subject in the friar's mind as there had been upon the former occasion; and the happier

feelings of hope and confidence were now so firmly rooted there, that it would have been difficult to displace them.

It will be remembered that father Lawrence had seen the person of Vargas only once, for during the short colloquy which he had maintained with him the first time that Vargas had witnessed his descent to the tree on the rock, scarcely more than his head was visible through the *porte machicoulè*. The slight feeling of recognition which the friar experienced fell naturally enough into the current of his present thoughts, and he said " by St. Jerome but I know thee !"

Vargas was alarmed at this exclamation, not doubting but that it applied to the friar's latter acquaintance with him; he was, however, agreeably reassured when father Lawrence continued:—

" It has pleased Heaven but to swell the mould of thy features and not to alter their proportion; thou wearest now the self-same face as when—shall I ever forget it——I gazed upon thee as I took thee from yon tree. *Ave Maria purissima!*"

It was not without considerable difficulty and delicacy, that Vargas succeeded in reducing the fervour of the friar's mind to any thing like rational conversation. However, after a longer time in endeavouring to procure the information and testimony he wanted, than my readers would be inclined to occupy in hearing the details, he attained his object; and heard in many sentences what I will proceed to relate in a few words.

Father Lawrence had been at once the confessor and the creature of the Marchioness of Montemolin, who fre-

quently resided at Plasencia, near which the convent of St. Justus was situated. The Marchioness possessed a haughty and overbearing mind which could ill brook restraint, and happening to come in contact with father Lawrence, who was possessed of little natural firmness, she assumed the command, rather than submitted to his authority; and obeyed the dictates both of custom and conscience in holding spiritual intercourse with a holy man, while at the same time she put no check upon the besetting sin of her nature, but indulged that haughtiness of temper, by casting over it only a thin covering of humility. In the situation in which, according to her confession, she was placed by the appeal of the unfortunate and deserted Marchioness of Velada, she had no difficulty in trusting to Lawrence, but

on the contrary, unhesitatingly and with authority declared to him that the child must not live.

I will not enter into a detail of the feelings which influenced father Lawrence upon this occasion, suffice it to say, that he was not ruffian enough to be reckless of the crime, of which, nevertheless, he was weak and wicked enough to undertake the commission. Poignards or poison could have been found in Plasencia, but the mother having been secured in a convent, the friar took the child, and hardly knowing his own intentions, he set forward from the city. A day's journey on his mule brought him to Alange, where the gloomy appearance of the deserted Moorish castle attracted his attention; it seemed a spot fitted by its solitary situation for the perpetration of such deeds as that he

meditated, and leaving his mule at the venta, he mounted the ascent, at that time rarely trodden by human foot.

He had worked up his mind to the commission of the murder, and, as with the infant in his arms he gained the fearful summit of Alange, and looked down the dizzy and dreadful depth which the flat side presented, the idea instantly suggested itself which decided the infant's fate; with a hurried and unsteady hand he let the child fall, rather than flung it, down the precipice, and the spreading branches of the tree which has been already mentioned, were providentially permitted to receive the hapless innocent; who, clinging instinctively to its leafy cradle, made its safety known by the frequent repetition of its cries.

Father Lawrence, the moment that

he had committed the crime, had been struck with its enormity, and was rivetted to the spot by the imaginary presence of the prince of darkness, who, the diseased state of his mind, and the corrupt state of his religion, combined to present in personal appearance, as the instigator of the act. When, however, the cries of the infant made him look over the precipice, and he saw it safely lodged a few yards only below him, another idea presented itself, and he conjured up the heavenly host spreading their wings to prevent the crime which the rebel spirit had planned. What was the effect of this extraordinary combination of circumstances upon the character of father Lawrence, was sufficiently shown by his conduct; with the most undaunted courage he ventured down that unventurable path, quaintly call-

ed the Saracen's Scymitar: he rescued his little victim, and finding the chapel of Santiago in a deserted and ruinous state, into which it had fallen since the death of the last hermit; he established himself there for the purpose of purifying himself from the crime he had intended, by performing the vow of a frequent pilgrimage to the spot where the infant had been saved, which he had made in the enthusiasm of the moment.

Having obtained the permission and assistance of his fraternity at St. Justus, in repairing the chapel and establishing himself in the ermita of Alange, he found it extremely inconvenient to be burthened with the unwonted office of tending to the wants of a little infant. Father Pablo, then prior of the convent of St. Justus, and afterwards Archbishop of Seville, in a

pastoral visit to Llerena, stopped at the hermitage of father Lawrence, where he received the friar's confession, and ratified his penance; and, moreover, not having then a mind so absolutely deformed by indulgence in sin as it afterwards became, he without much difficulty, consented to take some steps towards relieving father Lawrence of the child, without allowing it to be known to the Marchioness of Montemolin: and according he wrote to his early friend the Marquis of Bohorquia, and the result of his application is sufficiently known to the reader.

Having obtained information to this effect, Vargas drew up a statement of so much of the facts as were necessary to connect the papers which he had received from the Marchioness of Montemolin, with that to which the

Archbishop of Seville had affixed his signature at Zufre; the whole togegether forming the body of evidence upon which he relied for obtaining from his father an acknowledgment of his rights.

The night was considerably advanced before Vargas had finished his conference with father Laurence, and the moon served only to set him on his way to the town of Alange, leaving the stars to guide him there. He found Cornelia in much anxiety for his long absence, and Meneses in some fear lest his Inquisitorial habit might prove the means of subjecting him to great peril; he had succeeded in retrieving his mule from the possession of Master Rock, but not without an altercation, during which he had been treated more roughly than was consistent with the respect generally

paid to an officer of the Inquisition, and had even been threatened with a complaint to the Commissary of that tribunal, resident at Alange.

Under these circumstances, Meneses very joyfully resumed his proper habiliments, heartily rejoicing that in his assumed character he had succeeded even beyond his hopes, in the great object of his disguise. He was not, however, anxious to press the adventure any further, but satisfied with his own feelings of delight in the chivalrous surmounting of danger, and completely paid by the grateful affection of Vargas and Cornelia, he took his leave of them, setting forward without a moment's delay in his own costume and on his own mule, for his own city of Valencia; trusting that all the malice of the Archbishop, whenever he should be let loose, and

all the machinations of the Inquisition, would never be able to identify Don Diego de Meneses y Adarga, with Diego Carretaro, the alguazil.

Vargas and Cornelia, fully aware that there was no safety for them where the power of the Inquisition was unchecked, as in the Castiles, determined to hasten with all dispatch to throw themselves into the prison of the Manifestacion at Zaragoza, a proof of the security of which had so lately been given in the case of Antonio Perez. Dismissing, therefore, the litter, as Cornelia was now sufficiently strong to travel without it, they mounted the horses which had brought Vargas and Meneses from the banks of the Guadalquivir, and commenced their journey towards the capital of Aragon.

CHAPTER XXX.

Assemble presently the people hither:
And when they hear me say, *it shall be so*
I' the right and strength o'the Commons, be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry *fine;* if death, cry *death;*
Insisting on the old prerogative.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN the beginning of this book I recorded the important events of the 24th May, 1590, in Zaragoza, the death of the Marquis of Almenara, and the restitution of Antonio Perez to the prison of the Manifestacion from that of the Holy Tribunal. Those events were soon followed by others still more important, which, both on account of their historical interest, and their connexion with the subsequent

fate of Vargas and Cornelia, I shall proceed to relate.

The embers of the Constitution of Aragon burnt brightly as they were about to expire. The success which had attended the people's defence of their great privilege, the Manifestacion, together with the signal manner in which the infringement of it had been revenged, had excited the popular pride, and encouraged the general feeling of discontent at the measures which Philip adopted. The citizens of Zaragoza fancied themselves as free as they had been when they dictated that extraordinary oath to their princes, "We, who are as good as you, constitute you our King and Master, provided that you preserve our rights and liberties, and if not, not." While their magistrates, with chivalrous patriotism, raised the standard of their conduct

to the letter of their liberties, without considering that the progress of time, and the vast political changes which had taken place in Europe, had considerably altered the spirit of them.

The popular triumph of the eventful 24th of May had been succeeded by new victories. Two of the lugartenientes of the kingdom had been denounced as traitors, one by Antonio Perez, for refusing him the protection of the laws when he had been in danger from the Enquesta, the other by Don Martin de la Nuza, one of Perez's warmest friends, for some other breach of constitutional rights. The popular feeling was so decidedly against the two officers, that the result of their trial might easily have been anticipated. In the course of the investigation the public excitement was supported by every means: placards and

pasquinades abounded; a dialogue in verse, supposed to have been written by Antonio Perez himself, was extremely popular, and calculated in every way to increase the headstrong passions of the people. It introduced the soul of the Marquis of Almenara in the infernal regions, conversing with that of a former Governor of Aragon; and all the popular arguments were placed in the strongest light, while those on the opposite side were ridiculed as much as possible. It is not surprising that the result of the trial of the two lugartenientes should have been such as the people desired. They were sentenced to be deprived of their offices; and the sentence was received as a public triumph.

All Zaragoza experienced the contagious thirst for liberty which Antonio Perez had imported with his cause.

The restless spirit of political contention beset that unhappy city. The noblest names in Aragon were ranged on one side or on the other, and unfortunately, as in all civil divisions, so in this, the same names, borne by different offspring of the same stock, were found in the opposing parties. Don Diego de Heredia warmly advocated the public cause, while his brother, the Conde de Fuentes, as warmly opposed it. Don Juan de Luna, of one of the most ancient and noble of the Aragonese families, strongly supported the popular opinion, which his cousin the Conde de Morata most violently deprecated.

While such was the political situation of Zaragoza, an extraordinary tardiness on the part of the King and his Ministers served to draw on the people with a fallacious hope, and to

make them over-estimate their own strength, and, at the same time, it disheartened the noble and powerful advocates of the Royal cause resident in the city. One by one they grew alarmed for their personal safety, and gradually retired to their estates, leaving Zaragoza free for the popular faction. The Conde de Belchite was detested by the people, because they imagined that he betrayed their rights and fawned upon the King, in the hope of obtaining the title of Duke of Hijar, together with the hat of a grandee, which confers the privilege of remaining covered in the Royal presence; both these he afterwards acquired, and his posterity possess them at this day. He prudently left Zaragoza and went to Madrid to further his ambitious views. The Count of Sástago, who had been the Viceroy,

had not escaped the stigma of favouring Philip's pretensions, and, under the excuse of a religious retirement, he resided altogether at his country-seat. So also the Duke of Villahermosa, the Counts of Fuentes and Morata, and almost all the other noblemen, who either dissented from the popular feeling or wished to remain neuter, under different pretexts withdrew themselves from the difficulties and dangers which a residence in Zaragoza was likely to bring upon them, and remained with all possible privacy at their feudal palaces.

In the midst of these extraordinary difficulties, no instructions were received from Madrid, or at least no public measures were taken ostensibly emanating from the Court; but the Viceroy, acting either by secret orders, or from a desire to please the King,

determined to deliver up Antonio Perez to the Inquisition, and for that purpose he required from every Aragonese nobleman a certain number of armed vassals to enable him to effect what he designed, having had quite sufficient experience of the power of the people if they chose to exert it. The appearance, however, of armed men within the city at such a moment, and for such a purpose, was enough to overturn all the barriers of order which had not already been broken down. The people grew more bold, more insolent. The Viceroy and his officers found their courage fail them at the moment they had prepared for action, and they dismissed the levy which they had required of the noblemen, having very much increased the evil they had hoped to have lessened, by giving the people still another tri-

umph, and making them more highly and more falsely estimate the extent of their own power and importance.

It was at this period that Vargas and Cornelia arrived at Zaragoza, where Vargas, being an Aragonese by birth, and, in right of his mother, claimed the privilege of Manifestacion for himself and his wife, and his claim was immediately allowed. Apartments were accordingly assigned to him in the prison, but it was with fear and trembling that he took possession of them when he understood from his friend Perez that the first abortive attempt of the Viceroy to break the sacred security of the asylum, was about to be followed by another to which he could hardly anticipate any thing but success. Information had been received in a private manner from Madrid, that the King was highly

incensed at the dilatory and inefficient conduct of the noblemen, and that he meditated a signal punishment. This intelligence had inspired them all with a strong desire to do something which might soften, if not prevent, the intended blow, and they had met in council and determined that Antonio Perez should be given up to the Inquisitors at the Aljaferia.

The 24th of September was fixed upon as the day for putting their design into execution, exactly four months after the former memorable abduction, as it may be called, of this notable manifestado. Never was any important event arranged and conducted with less talent or political tact. On the night before the day they had fixed upon, the armed vassals of the noblemen, which had been levied again, were admitted into the town with a

mystery which proceeded from fear in the magistrates, and which was calculated more than any thing else to add to the causes for fear. The soldiers were disposed in the Plaza, in front of the prison of the Manifestacion, where during the whole night they were tampered with by the populace, and many were persuaded to give up their ammunition. It was the season of the vintage; many labourers and proprietors would have found the impulse of their interest exceed the impulse of their patriotism; and persons who were quietly disposed might have repaired to their ordinary occupations in the fields. But the municipal authorities took the most effectual means of adding all persons of these descriptions as a powerful reinforcement to the mob, by not allowing the gates of the city to be opened as usual, so that

considerable numbers were thus prevented from absenting themselves, and were forced to fall into the stream.

The impotent Bishop of Teruel, who still continued in the viceroyalty, seemed to have found an able successor to supply the place of the Marquis of Almenara. Who his secret counsellor was, had not been discovered, but he evidently acted with a decision and a zeal in the royal cause equal to that which the unfortunate nobleman had displayed. Every thing seemed to favour the enemies of Perez and the constitution of Aragon, for these were now identified by the people. Don Juan de la Nuza, the Justicia of Aragon, was taken ill and died two days only previous to the intended restitution of Perez to the inquisition. His son, named also Juan, succeeded him; but although a patriot in his

heart, he was too young and too inexperienced to meet the emergency of the situation; and having scarcely assumed his important office, he could hardly be fitted to oppose so formidable a host as the regal part of the administration presented. He gave his permission and authority to the Viceroy to take from the prison of the Manifestacion the body of Antonio Perez; and acting upon this official instrument, the Viceroy sallied forth from his palace on the morning of the 24th of September, 1590.

He was surrounded by all the officers of the kingdom who were appointed by the crown, together with all the noblemen who espoused the cause of Philip. The whole procession set forward on foot, and were escorted by a select and trusty squadron of light cavalry, which acted as a body guard

Another squadron of the same corps had been parading the town the whole morning to endeavour to prevent tumultuous assembling; in this however they had been absolutely unsuccessful, as their influence extended no further than the points of their swords, and as fast as they cleared one street, another was occupied by the crowd.

The assembled inhabitants of Zaragoza on the 24th of September were different in every respect from the assembled inhabitants of Zaragoza on the 24th of May. Upon the latter day they had congregated suddenly from an instantaneous impulse, and what they did was unpremeditated and unarranged. This was not the case on the 24th September. For four months preceding, the object which was proposed to be effected on that day by the authorities, had been contemplated

—had been denounced as unconstitutional, as traiterous, by almost every man; and almost every man had determined that it should not be; each had expressed this determination as if his own physical power was to prevent it. They had besides been accustomed to meet,—to meet in large bodies; frequently to celebrate what they considered to be triumphs effected by the overawing power of their anticipated anger. All these circumstances constituted a characteristic difference between the state of the assembled people of Zaragoza upon the two occasions.

The prison of the Manifestacion stood in the great market-place, where the vice-regal procession arrived with little or no interruption. The Viceroy and his friends entered a house immediately opposite to the prison, and the

representative of the royal person, acting by the advice of his friends, proceeded to show himself to the people in the principal balcony. There was a morose silence in the market-place, or rather so low a murmur, that, considering the vast multitude collected together, it may be said to have been a silence. The appearance of the mitred Viceroy had as little effect as the passage of his procession—both were apparently neglected, and every man in the crowd seemed occupied in discussing important business with his neighbour.

As soon as the Viceroy had taken his station opposite to the prison, and his body guard was known to be in readiness, the sorcerer Antonio Perez was brought into the great hall of the prison, where a lugarteniente and a deputy of the kingdom, together with

some subordinate officers, stood ready to deliver him in due form to the superior officers of the Inquisition who were waiting to receive him. But while this process was going forward, important events occurred in the city which I shall proceed to relate.

All the friends of the Viceroy who witnessed the apparently quiet but pre-occupied disposition of the immense populace in the market-place, trembled for the storm which it so evidently foreboded. The most natural suggestion of their minds was probably the true one, that the crowd, organized and prepared for action, were meditating a powerful attack upon the authorities whenever the prisoner should be brought forth.—A carriage, drawn by four mules, stood at the prison gate to receive and convey Perez to the Aljaferia, and the people had hitherto al-

lowed it quietly to continue at its post. This conduct very ill accorded with the warmth and violence which had previously characterized the popular expression of feeling. This very restraint was a portentous sign of disciplined arrangement, which yet was unequal to resist the impulse that a sudden and unexpected excitement produced in the minds of the people. The squadron of the Viceroy's bodyguard which was parading the town to endeavour to maintain order, had been most injudiciously ordered to suppress the cry of "Viva la libertad!" ("Liberty for ever!") which was become the rallying word of the rabble. They had found less occasion to act upon this order than they had expected; and as they attributed this to submission in the populace, they gradually acquired a higher idea of the terror

which their appearance excited, than they would have done if they could have known the real reason for the apparent relinquishment of the favourite cry. Emboldened by this success, one of the soldiers imprudently fired his carbine in at a window, from whence had issued a weak repetition of the obnoxious pass-word. A child of very tender age was the victim of this wantonness. The distracted mother was a Spanish woman, and not likely to waste her moments of vengeance in maternal tears. With the bleeding body of her murdered infant in her arms, she flew to the nearest church, into which she entered by the little postern, and seizing the largest bell rope, she loudly sounded the tocsin. Having tolled the bell until her strength failed, and her purpose

of alarm was accomplished, she presented herself to the populace upon a low parapet which ran round part of the church, and, with the voice of fury, and the gestures of frenzy, she called upon them to revenge the murder of an Aragonese, and to secure their own liberty.

The match was lighted,—the train had caught,—the flame spread,—the contagion of the mother's madness came in contact with predisposed matter,—and while the unhappy Viceroy and his friends were flouting the air with their proud presence in the balcony, and flattering themselves into the hope that the overawed many were cowed by the authority of the distinguished few, an electrifying shout pealed upon their ears—the forbidden cry, roared by a thousand voices, and

gathering a fresh impulse from every head over which it rolled, struck them at once with surprise and terror.

It was no longer in the power of the prudent friends of liberty to restrain the impetuosity of the wild and enthusiastic: the plan for a rescue had been anticipated, the object was now to prevent its being frustrated. To this end, Gil de Mesa, whom I have already introduced to the reader as the staunch friend of Antonio Perez, and as the murderer, or, as the popular party termed it, the executioner of the Marquis of Almenara, advanced into the market-place, at the head of a few armed men, whom he had prepared for the purpose of the rescue, and secreted in the corner of one of the streets. As he entered the Plaza, a violent rush from an opposite street pointed out an immediate object of

action, and rendered battle and bloodshed inevitable. The squadron which paraded the streets injudiciously sought to repair by violence the mischief which their violence had produced. They charged the shouting people sword in hand; and at the moment that Gil de Mesa appeared on one side of the market-place, a crowd of screaming fugitives, closely pursued by soldiers with brandished swords, occasioned an extraordinary commotion on the other.

The mounted men were much above the heads of those on foot, and as they came galloping, or rather prancing, through the crowd, Gil de Mesa ordered his musqueteers to fire upon them. His followers were few, between twenty and thirty only, but they were all inspired with the fiery spirit of the moment, and each took deadly

aim. Nearly twenty of the soldiers fell, wounded or slain, and the unexpected volley was the signal for a general engagement of the most dreadful kind. The mounted guard of the Viceroy bore the brunt of the desperate vengeance of the mob; for of the armed vassals of the noblemen who were posted to protect the prison, some remained absolutely neuter, while the greater number took an active part with the people.

It will easily be imagined that a contest of such a nature could not last long, nor could the issue of it be very doubtful. Some few of the crowd received sabre wounds, and three only lost their lives; while five gentlemen of distinction on the part of the Viceroy were sacrificed, and nearly one third of the soldiers were killed or wounded, and the rest dispersed. The

audacity of the victorious mob rising with their impetuosity and success, they shouted forth their intention of burning out the Viceroy and Philippine grandees, as those who espoused the royal cause were nick-named. The very mention of such an idea conjured up the remembrance of the Marquis of Almenara's fate, and all the persons who were in the house opposite the prison immediately betook themselves to flight by means of the flat roof. The palace of the Duke of Villahermosa happened to be accessible without crossing any intervening street, and here the Viceroy and his friends took refuge, fortunately without having been traced by the people, who finding that their victims had escaped, were easily diverted from their intention of setting fire to the house by Gil de Mesa, who, urging the necessity of pro-

ceeding upon their original purpose, himself set the example by cutting the traces by which the four mules were bound to the carriage prepared for Perez. The animals, being at liberty and alarmed, became troublesome in the crowd, the characteristic feeling of which being impatience, they were all four shot.

Gil de Mesa saw that this was the moment of his friend's fortune, and delayed not to seize it while it was yet time. He proceeded at the head of his victorious musqueteers and clamorous partizans to the door of the prison. The security of the prison of the Manifestacion was rather trusted to the moral barriers placed around it by the constitution, than to any guard of armed men, and Gil de Mesa found no difficulty in throwing open the gates.

Antonio Perez was still in the hall, having been delivered up to the officers appointed by the Inquisition to receive him. These saw the impossibility of attempting to remove him, and therefore remained where they were; but the moment they had received him from the hands of the lugarteniente, they proceeded to add to the security of the prisoner by putting heavy irons upon his legs and arms. He was in this state when his friends entered.

Gil de Mesa acted with the most politic precaution in restraining the musqueteers from setting Perez instantly at liberty; instead of so doing he turned to the lugarteniente, and boldly demanded, as a constitutional right, that the chains should be taken off from the limbs of a free-born Aragonese under Manifestacion.

"He is no longer under Manifestacion," said the lugarteniente.

The shout of indignation which followed this declaration, and the menaces which it produced from the armed friends who supported Gil de Mesa, had the immediate effect of altering the conduct of the lugarteniente. But his order that the irons should be removed from Perez scarcely anticipated the execution of it, which was unceremoniously commenced immediately after the reply to Mesa.

With a shout of triumph Perez was borne into the balcony of the great hall, which overlooked the clamorous multitude without. He was an extremely eloquent man, his manners were fascinating, and he possessed great knowledge of human nature; his education had given him a fund of learning and accomplishments; by

his long intercourse with princes he had acquired the polish which sets off talents to the best advantage; and the important share which he had taken in the direction of government had exercised him in all the politic arts which give their possessor an influence over the minds of men.

A comparative silence having been obtained, Perez addressed the crowd. He spoke in the warmest terms of their conduct in defence of the great bulwark of their liberty; seemed not to consider himself in any degree the object of their affection, but expressed his happiness at being the individual whose fate had called forth the assertion of their general rights. He told them that their object was effected, and that the Manifestacion had not been broken; that he had no wish but to remain there, where every fellow-

countryman was not only his guardian, but a guardian who felt the necessity of doing his duty. He besought them to disperse, satisfied with having maintained their privilege, and ready to maintain it again, whenever that privilege should be invaded.

This speech had exactly the effect which Perez had anticipated and intended; it was followed by clamorous applause, and an universal call to him to leave the Manifestacion, which was no longer a safeguard for the oppressed. The balcony was scarcely twice the height of a man from the ground, and those who were immediately under it, supposing that he was prevented from leaving the prison, endeavoured to facilitate his escape by leaping upon each other's back, and thereby making a sort of ladder by which he might descend. But Perez

retired into the hall, and there declared that he fully relied upon the impossibility of infringing the right of Manifestacion in the face of the people of Aragon.

In the mean time the demands of the people became more urgent, more violent, and more in unison with the blood-spilling spirit which had been awakened amongst them. Two unhappy men had been stoned, beaten, and trampled to death, because the one was recognized as belonging to the Inquisition, and the other was supposed to be a Philippine, as the anti-popular party were called. Finding therefore that it would be prudent to appease the monster when it was impossible to oppose it, the lugarteniente wisely endeavoured to compromise the point by declaring, that in virtue of his office he withdrew the

protection of the Manifestacion from Antonio Perez, and would justify his conduct in so doing to the proper authorities.

Against this Antonio Perez distinctly protested, and called loudly for a notary to draw up a formal instrument of his protest. The lugarteniente had however retired; no notary was to be found; and Perez, therefore, with a well feigned reluctance, gave himself up to the will of the people, and was carried from the hall into the Plaza below. Here he was placed upon a horse, and conducted through the principal street, amid the deafening din of—Viva la libertad! Viva Antonio Perez! Liberty for ever! Long live Antonio Perez. Having arrived at the palace of his friend, Don Diego de Heredia, one of the principal nobles of the popular party, he there

dismounted, but the people forced him to appear in the balcony, greeting him with their overpowering and triumphant shouts.

This tumultuous assembly, fired with rage, stained with blood, and elated with triumph, had passed through the greater part of the city in their victorious perambulation; they had marked their passage by leaving their venom as they went in detached parties from the main body. The multitude, which, when concentrated, had been condensed into the market place and its immediate environs, yet, with a terrible power of divisibility, was sufficient to spread over the whole city without losing its tumultuary character; the the spirit of evil was abroad, and discord reigned in Zaragoza. The clergy had assembled in their respective parishes and convents, and

were offering up their prayers for the restoration of peace. Some of them, when they found the people more thinly scattered, and judged that the crowd was penetrable, ventured upon more active measures; and the friars of the two convents of St. Francisco joined with the parochial clergy of St. Paul to form a procession of Miserecordia. The priests carried the consecrated elements, and the friars their miraculous images, with all the pomp of idolatry, while the united choirs chaunted the *miserere*.

The effect was imposing and powerful, and considerably assuaged the minds of the people; but a circumstance shortly after occurred which had the effect of completely dispersing the multitude. A sudden and violent shower of rain, which lasted for up-

wards of an hour, fell over the whole city, which being firmly believed to be the miraculous interposition of St. Francis, in procuring attention to the prayers of the devout procession, was more than sufficient to extinguish the lingering embers of the fire, and to drive all the inhabitants of Zaragoza to their homes.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me,
Hold thee, from this, for ever.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE events which took place in Zaragoza after the 24th of September, 1590, are of great historical importance and interest. I am not, however, writing a history of Aragon, nor of Antonio Perez, and therefore I will not dilate upon this subject; if, however, it should have awakened any interest in the mind of the reader, I strongly advise him immediately to set to work to learn Spanish; and I promise him an ample recompense for his

trouble in reading Antonio Perez's * own account of the matter on one side, and Leonardo de Argensola's † account of it on the other; from both of which he will derive great amusement and instruction, if he has any taste, or desire for historical information.

Leaving, however, the details as the reward of such of my readers as may choose to undertake the task I have advised, I will shortly explain some of the great events, as they are necessary for the elucidation of the history of Vargas and Cornelia.

Philip the Second had at this moment collected a small army, the object of which, as all the world sup-

* Relaciones de Antonio Perez, Secretario de Estado que fue del Rey Don Felipe 2. Genevra, 1654.

† Informacion de los sucesos del reino de Aragon en los años de 1590 y 1591. Por Lupercio Leonardo de Argensola. Madrid, 1808.

posed, was to enter France in aid of the Catholic cause against the Hugonots. Whatever might have been the original intention with respect to this army, it soon became quite clear upon what service it was to be employed; when the news of what had taken place at Zaragoza reached Madrid, it was put in motion and marched to the frontiers of Aragon, where the head-quarters were established, at a small town called Agreda, the last on the Castilian side.

In the mean time the popular ferment increased: the young Justicia, whom, as I have already said, had taken upon himself that dignified office only two days before the tumult, in consequence of the death of his father, caught the prevailing fervour. Those nobles who continued to oppose what was termed the constitu-

tional feeling, had again absented themselves; and, at Zaragoza at least, there was an apparent unanimity of opinion as to the measures to be adopted. The laws were express in forbidding the entrance of foreign troops into the kingdom under any circumstances; and this being the case, the old privilege of Union was talked of, and the Justicia despatched requisitions to every district, calling upon each to produce their proportion of armed me.

This overt act of the chief magistrate of the kingdom rendered it necessary that every man should decide on the part he would take. Such of the nobles as continued to adhere to the royal cause departed instantly for Madrid. Many who had kept aloof from prudent motives, now, on the contrary, returned to Zaragoza,

and ranged themselves on their national side. Of the districts and towns some few returned the requisition of the Justicia, and sent loyal addresses to Philip; some took no notice of the requisition, and remained inactive; and some sent their complement of men with all despatch, and thus was formed what was called the army of Aragon.

The Duke of Villahermosa, by far the most powerful nobleman of Aragon, possessed a castle at Pedrola, which contained some pieces of artillery. The Duke himself, as we have seen, had espoused the King's cause, but he had remained in Zaragoza after the public "Declaration of resistance," or legal act by which the Justicia had assembled the army. He was, therefore, considered as adhering to the cause of his country, although it was by his pre-

sence alone that he gave a cold and inactive consent to its measures. When, therefore, the Justicia required the Duke to lend the artillery at Pedrola to the nation, he had no alternative, but was forced to acquiesce in the proposal, as well as the Count of Aranda, who was in the same manner obliged to resign two or three small field-pieces, which decorated rather than defended his castle.

The authorities were using all diligence to equip and otherwise prepare the army of Aragon, which was collected at Zaragoza, when the Castilian troops arrived at Agreda. Things, however, still remained quiet, as the frontiers had not yet been entered; and, during this pause of preparation, the King despached a confidential agent in a private manner to Zaragoza, to endeavour, if possible, to prevent

his subjects of one kingdom from taking arms against his subjects of another. This agent was no other than the Marquis of Velada. When this mission, and the name of the person who was charged with it, was known in the capital of Aragon, Vargas hailed it as a providential omen in his favour. He occupied himself in drawing up a full and clear account of the vicissitudes of his fate, as far as they related to the necessary proofs of his birth. To this he annexed the important papers of which he had become possessed in the palace of Montemolin, the declaration of the Archbishop, and that of father Lawrence, and he accompanied the whole by the following letter to his father :

My Lord and Father,

It has pleased Providence, in a most wonderful manner, to make me

informed of circumstances which, without His interposition, I could never have known. By reading the enclosed memorial you will find that you have a son still existing, on whose existence you have probably long ceased to bestow a thought. That son's first object in addressing you is, to offer his humble duty, and to declare that if it may be lawful for a child to talk of forgiving a parent, he does most heartily forgive all that your conscience may require to be forgiven at his hands. I have not risen, my Lord, to cause you one uneasy sensation, nor to demand my rights of primogeniture; for I will never wear honours which I can only receive by a painful and public confession on the part of my father; and lest this sacrifice might appear extraordinary, I must take away any portion

of merit which you may be inclined to attach to it, by stating that it has pleased my Heavenly Father to enlighten my understanding upon the subject of His holy religion, and thereby to render my residence in Spain dangerous, and any assumption of nobility there impossible.

I am married, and in my alliance I have not disgraced the blood of my ancestors; my wife is the daughter of the Marquis of Bohorquia. We are about to leave the soil of Spain and to take refuge in Bearne; my earnest desire is to throw myself at your feet before we depart. I pray earnestly for your welfare, spiritual and temporal.

Bartolomé Davila.

This letter had been the result of very much deliberation between Vargas and Cornelia. When Vargas had

first become acquainted with his birth, he had naturally endeavoured to procure the strongest proofs of his identity, with a view to obtaining his right. For this purpose he procured the testimony of the Archbishop and of the friar; but upon mature consideration, he felt that if he were established in his rights, it must be by exposing the disgraceful, the criminal, conduct of his father; he felt that after what had taken place at Seville, no corner of Spain was secure to him. He reflected also, that unless he were a Roman Catholic he could not take his rank amongst the nobility of his country; and to turn from the light that had been vouchsafed to him, was a thought which he never for a moment entertained. England was open to him, free and enlightened England, and thither he determined to fly. His

friend, Antonio Perez, purposed placing himself under the protection of the protestant Henry of Bearne, the future Henry the Fourth of France. Here Vargas intended to join him as soon as he had seen his father, fixing upon England, however, as his ultimate home.

The Marquis had not long arrived, before Vargas was informed of that event; the pleasure it gave him was increased by learning that his friend and brother, Don Felix, accompanied his father. A short note from Vargas speedily brought Felix to the Manifestacion. He appeared in his military costume, with a morrion and a peto, or sort of breast plate, of the very newest fashion, having his device emblazoned thereon. He met Vargas cordially, and embraced him, saying, "may you live a thousand years, Don

Bartolomé, in spite of roaring monsters and prison bars. When I left you at Alange, you were about to go in search of most ferocious adventures, seeing that some affectionate Pylades was holding the mouth of a monster, till you should come and be swallowed up."

Vargas returned his embrace with more warmth than might have been warranted by their acquaintance at Alange, and smiled as he replied, " I have fortunately escaped all the terrors of the monster, and have placed myself in this secure retreat to be safe from any of his future attacks."

" Marry, not so secure either; you have but to mobify your cause, and graft it upon the minds of the million, and they will unprison you presently."

" I can unprison myself when it pleases me," replied Vargas; " and it

will please me as soon as I receive an answer to this letter of which, Don Felix, I request you will be the bearer."

"If it be not to the Sun in the shape of a woman,—nor to the Devil in the shape of a man, nor to any thing in the shape of your roaring monster, you may command me, Don Bartolomé. But as I possess no talisman to hold me harmless from the burning blaze of beauty, neither to secure me from satanic assaults, and least of all am I fitted for quadrupedal contests, unless they be tauric tilts in the arena; in any of these cases I claim excuse."

In answer to this rhapsody, Vargas showed him the superscription of the packet, which Felix received with a smile, and a promise of immediate delivery.

Some pleasant conversation followed, in which, however, Vargas care-

fully forbore to give any hint of the subject of his letter. Felix retired with a promise of returning with the reply as soon as he received it.

I will not enter into the feelings of the Marquis of Velada upon perusing the unexpected contents of the packet; they came upon him so suddenly, and so entirely without preparation, that he found it very difficult to decide how to act. The Marchioness of Montemolin had taken care that he should be informed of the death of his wife and child; of course without any circumstances which could excite either astonishment or remorse. The latter feeling had at first taken hold of the Marquis of Velada's mind; but after some time had passed, and the recurrence of worldly business had produced its natural effect in blunting the poignancy of conscientious feeling; after he had confessed, done penance,

and been absolved ;—after he had voluntarily paid a considerable sum for the performance of masses to release the souls of his wife and child from purgatory, he had laid the matter by, and had given over thinking of it altogether ; or if by chance some wandering recollection happened to be brought forward by any accidental link in the chain of his thoughts, he easily dismissed it as the remembrance of a debt that had been paid, and rather took credit to himself for his munificence in discharging it, by which he had no doubt that such lightly burthened souls as those of his poor wife and child must have been long since freed from suffering, and admitted with the saints into heaven.

This being the state of the Marquis's mind upon this subject, I will leave it to the reader to imagine his extreme

astonishment upon the receipt of Vargas's letter; he could not doubt the truth of his statement; the proofs were clear and indubitable:—restitution of rights to his son seemed at first to be the proper mode of acting, but upon more mature consideration he felt that restitution to his son could not be made without disgrace to himself, and that the disgrace would be a very heavy additional punishment for a sin already expiated fully, nay, more than fully expiated, inasmuch as he had consiberably superadded to his aportioned penance, and thereby made the measure of his atonement overflow. This was clear; nothing could be more equitable; it was very priest-reasoning, and the Pope himself could not have decided it better.

Having thus convinced himself that Vargas had no single claim upon him

for the restitution of his rights, it made him extremely comfortable to find from the letter, that he had no intention of preferring any; indeed Vargas had expressed this in a manner which seemed to him fully to satisfy and confirm his execrable sophistry. Having thus easily quieted his conscience, he nevertheless felt an inconsistent repugnance to seeing his new found son; and this was more than sufficient to counterbalance the paternal feelings, which, having lain dormant for so many years, were scarcely awakened to their natural energy by the sudden call which had roused them. In another point of view, important duties clashed and rendered it improper for him to indulge the feelings of a father, when they were opposed to the feelings of a Catholic. Vargas had acknowledged himself a heretic; that

he was his son might form some excuse in his *conscience*, though not in law, for not denouncing him to the Inquisition; but it was evidently improper to hold any communication with a heretic.

These thoughts usurped the time of sleep with the Marquis the night after the receipt of his packet. On the following morning, as Vargas was sitting with Cornelia, in anxious expectation of a visit from Felix, a priest was shown in to him, who announced himself as the Marquis of Velada's chaplain.

Before the prisoners had time to return the chaplain's salutation, he said, "My son, I am commissioned to deposit this packet with you, which the Marquis of Velada declares to be your property; he wishes you happiness, and desires to receive no further com-

munication from you;" and so saying, he immediately retired.

The packet contained a considerable sum of money in gold, and a much larger sum in an order upon a very wealthy merchant in Madrid; but all this was unaccompanied by a single word, either of acknowledgment or affection.

Vargas's first feelings of disappointment were very poignant, but they arose principally for his father. He himself had fully made up his mind as to the conduct which he should pursue; and indeed he had but one path before him; as a Protestant he could not live in Spain, and he had therefore determined to leave it; but he was afflicted at the unrepentant conduct of his father. After indulging his mind in this natural grief for some time, he turned to his wife; "We must look

to our own hearts, dearest Cornelia, for happiness: we must strive by our own conduct to merit it: we must place it above the reach of this world. Let us go at once; there is nothing in Spain to make us desire to remain in it any longer. I will take his money without scruple, for I have a just right to it. We will forgive the unhappy man, Cornelia; we will pray for him."

Vargas therefore acquiesced, without hesitation, in his father's desire to communicate with him no more; but he experienced another disappointment at finding that Felix had been forbidden to visit him. As Felix was ignorant of the relationship which existed between them, it appeared nowise extraordinary to him that his father should desire him not to hold converse with a person who had taken

a decided part against the cause which he was sent to advocate, and he obeyed without scruple.

The tide had turned at Zaragoza, and the fervour of popular phrenzy was ebbing fast. Don Diego de Heredia took the direction of every thing by his decided and energetic conduct in favour of the liberty of Aragon. The young Justicia looked to him for counsel in every difficulty, and all the subordinate authorities were set in motion by him. But the people could not shut their eyes to the consequences of their conduct: it had been too daring and too successful not to produce complete punishment. The most enthusiastic could hardly hope that the army of Aragon was capable of taking the field against the Castilian troops, and the popular feeling very evidently and rapidly changed its cha-

racter from the excitement of liberty and the exultation of triumph, to the despondency and recklessness of despair. Still, however, a show of resistance was supported, which the pause of the army of Castille, on the frontiers, served to dignify with the possibility of success. The authorities were too far pledged with the people, to be able to withdraw; and although every one foresaw the result, every one seemed to imagine that they deceived themselves.

The command of the Aragonese army had been forced upon the Duke of Villahermosa and the Count of Aranda, both of whom refused to accept it, until the Viceroy ratified their commissions. This he did, and they were invested with the command. A day was appointed for a general review and inspection of the forces in

the Campo del Toro within the city. The unhappy noblemen found themselves the unwilling generals of a few hundred men, badly armed, worse disciplined, and totally dispirited. All Zaragoza was abroad to see their hope paraded with all "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war." The sight that the troops presented banished every ray of hope, and at once struck them all with the chill of absolute despair. The people who came murmuring, were now maddening; a breath turned the weathercock of their anger from one point to another, and it settled at last against the commanders, for their unwillingness and inactivity. Here in a very short time it blew a storm, and the Duke and the Count soon found it necessary to fly for their lives. Their advantage, in being on horseback, enabled them to

reach the monastery of the order of St. Jerome, called Santa Engracia, where they hastened to take sanctuary.

No altar however is sacred from the rage of an infuriated populace. The fugitive noblemen felt this, and so did the monks of St. Jerome, for they gave them all the assistance in their power to escape to a place of greater security. They secreted them until after night-fall, when letting them down by ropes over the walls of the convent garden, (which were also the walls of the city) the Duke and the Count made the best of their way to Epila, a distance of eight leagues, which being a walled town, belonging to the Conde de Aranda, afforded them a secure retreat.

The day after this disheartening display of weakness and want of

confidence, the army of Castille entered the frontiers and marched directly upon Zaragoza. True to the last, the ill-advised Justicia obeyed the mad call of the people, and marched out of the city at the head of the miserable corps still called the army of Aragon. But the impulse which produced this apparently undaunted courage, was but the inebriating effect of the wild enthusiasm which sometimes springs from despair. The soldiers had scarcely turned their backs upon the gates of the city, before the impulse ceased to act, and man after man dropped off from the body almost at every footstep. The Justicia marched from Zaragoza at the head of nearly six hundred men; he arrived at Mozalbarba, a single league from the city, followed by only forty. This desertion was final and fatal to the

cause; and the miserable Justicia, shortly dismissing the remnant of the army of Aragon, betook himself with all speed to his friends at Epila.

The conclusion of this tragedy is shortly told: the king's army advanced; the Viceroy and all the authorities who had remained in the city went out to meet it, with every demonstration of apparent joy, and seeming altogether to forget that any thing had occurred which should render its entrance disagreeable. Don Diego de Heredia made the best of his way in an opposite direction, accompanied by Antonio Perez, Vargas, and Cornelia, and followed by such as had lost all hope of escaping the vengeance of the royal troops. In a few days they had crossed the Pyrenees, and they proceeded to implore the protection of the Princess Marguerite, sister of

Henry of Bearne; this they obtained without difficulty, and they remained secure from any further danger.

No steps were taken after the army entered Zaragoza, but every thing was allowed to grow quiet gradually; arrests were not even made; and by degrees those who had most to dread returned to the city. The Justicia resumed his functions, and the authorities had several duties. The people could hardly believe their senses; the thoughtless praised the clemency of the king, while the cunning held their tongues, and expected his revenge. Even these last began to waver in their opinion when it was unhappily proved to be too well founded. The Justicia was one day leaving the counsel chamber, and proceeding to hear mass, when a captain of the Castilian army, at the head of

his company, desired him to consider himself his prisoner; the Justicia replied, that holding his high office, he could not be arrested but by the cortes of the kingdom. He received no reply, but was hurried along to a private house, from whence, by a secret door, he was conveyed into the quarters of the Castilian general. The Duke of Villahermosa and the Conde de Aranda, were at the same moment artfully inveigled into different houses, and privately arrested.

However secretly these acts had been performed, they could not be long concealed from the people, who were seized with a universal panic. There was no meeting, however,—no attempt at resistance. The spirit of Aragon was broken, and every man looked as if the hand of death were upon him. The unfortunate Justicia

was the first victim. On the very evening of his arrest, he was informed that he was to die on the following morning. Three priests were sent to him, and all hope of trial and reprieve were taken away.

Shortly after day-break, on the next day, the Justicia was put into a carriage with his ghostly counsellors. The whole army of Castile lined the way from his prison to the place of execution. A herald went before the carriage, proclaiming by the sound of the trumpet, that the king commanded that Juan de la Nuza should be beheaded, his houses and castles razed to the ground, and all his goods confiscated as a traitor, who had raised a standard against the royal army.

The people who had been drawn together fled precipitately as the

herald pronounced these words, and when the carriage arrived at the market place, not a single creature was present but the soldiery. The royal sentence was executed, and the Justicia of Aragon was beheaded; but this act was performed in what appeared to be an uninhabited city, for every Aragonese had shut himself up in his house, rather than witness the horrible murder.

On the morning of this execution, the Duke of Villahermosa and the Count of Aranda were conveyed from Zaragoza; the former to Burgos, where he was imprisoned in the castle, while the fortress of Coca was destined to be the prison of the latter. Here they were both detained, while the process against them was preparing. In the mean while, however, both were put to the torture, the in-

quisitor Molina de Medrano being employed as the most proper person to extort and receive their confession. Both these unhappy victims died in prison in consequence of the severe treatment they received, nevertheless their process was drawn up, tried, and judged; and the estates of both were confiscated and their memories given over to infamy. Nine years after, however, the same counsel that awarded this sentence, reconsidered it, and reversed the attainder in the case of the Conde de Aranda, by which means his title and large estates were restored to his son.

Execution now followed execution, until the royal revenge was satiated, when a general pardon was proclaimed; and with the characteristic spirit of Philip the Second, a grand *Auto de fé* was reserved for the last scene of the

tragedy; in which, amongst less fortunate actors, the effigy of Antonio Perez was consigned to the flames, that were intended to be a representation of those to which his soul was delivered over by the inquisitorial anathemas.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Such are the villanous ups and downs of life,—
A king to day, to-morrow but a slave.
He at whose fatal bidding writhe the limbs,
Or crack the sinews of a conquer'd hero,
May yet invoke the gods to curb the groan
Which from his own compress'd and quivering lips
In the same torture would unhero him.

ARISTOMENES, A TRAGEDY.

THE reader has seen Vargas and his wife safe beyond the power of the Inquisition, under the protection of a protestant Prince, secure from want, and in a fair way of finding a safe retreat in the free dominions of Elizabeth. Here my duty as his historian would seem to end, and the last would have been my valedictory

chapter, but that I cannot help thinking that the reader may have some feeling of curiosity respecting the situation and ultimate fate of Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, whom we left in the safeguard of an honest yeoman of Andalusia, who considered him as a madman.

No sooner had the terror of the inquisitorial presence ceased to act, than Tio Andres began to discover that he had undertaken a very difficult, as well as a very foolish charge. The man might become raving, and bite somebody; or he might escape, and he should have to account for him to the holy tribunal; or a thousand things might happen. Against all these thousand probable mischances was opposed the single fact, that now there was no alternative; and therefore, like a wise man, he submitted to

necessity, and endeavoured to make the best of it.

The room in which the Archbishop remained had been carefully secured as soon as the alguazil and his friends had departed. Food had been sent to him from the farmer's fare, and the kind-hearted Tio Andres, having finished his own dinner, instead of retiring to sleep the siesta, ventured to pay his prisoner a visit, relying upon the assurance of Meneses, that in general he was harmless, and hoping to find him free from any fit.

Upon entering, he found the Archbishop sullenly sitting before an unemptied platter, and his salutation was answered by a sullen demand of "Well, what are they going to do with me?"

"Treat you kindly, friend," replied Andres; "provided you do not make

a different course necessary, by violent or insane behaviour. This room shall be you apartment, and the alcova there beyond, is a reposing place fit for a prince. Here you are to remain."

"Remain!" echoed the prelate: "Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, kidnapped and imprisoned in a hovel!—Impossible! the world has gone mad, or I have, and do but dream all this."

"The poor wretch is aware of his malady," thought Andres; "he is sadly to be pitied. Then sitting down upon a stool not far from his prisoner, he began in soothing accents to attempt to calm his mind by sage advice. "I am glad to see you are come to a knowledge of your unhappy state, friend; but strive against it, and, above all, never let your mind turn to the Archbishopric any more."

"What! I'm to be confined for life,

am I? Why does not the house tumble down upon the heads of these most sacrilegious imps!" Then, with horrid imprecations, he worked himself up into such phrenzy, that the pitying Tio Andres thought it advisable to make a rapid retreat; which he did, carefully securing himself against the possibility of being followed, by bolting and barring the door.

Scenes of this nature occurred every day. Tio Andres made many attempts to assuage the heat of his supposed madness, but all to no purpose; the moment he mentioned what the farmer believed to be his mad subject, there was no restraining the impetuosity of his phrenzy. Many were the conversations which the lunatic occasioned in the village of Zufre, and all the villagers had in turns been to look at the wretched man as at a wild beast.

These visits were made with all proper caution, by placing a ladder up to the window of his apartment, which the adventurous villager ascending, peeped into the lion's den.

Amongst other curious visitants, José Rascapelo, the barber of the neighbourhood, paid his respects to the prelate, at a moment when he happened to have been exceedingly irritated by the frequency of these visits. "By my faith, Tio Andres," said he, on descending the ladder, "but I have found out a cure for his lunatic Excellency. Water expelleth fire—marry, when he talks of being an archbishop, souse him, good Tio,—fishify him straight,—may be his madness is a dog madness which flieth from the fountain."

"Excellent good counsel, master Scrapeskin," said the farmer; "by

San Anton Abad, it shall forthwith have performance."

An enormous stable syringe, an instrument which has long been in common use in Spain, was immediately procured and filled with water, armed with which a stout peasant belonging to Tio Andres' farm, mounted the ladder and manfully stepped into the room, instead of only thrusting in his head as those who preceded him had done.

The tormented prelate roared forth his rage in unrepeatable curses and imprecations, adding, " Saints of Paradise! Demons of Darkness! Comes the villain to beard me thus—me, Archbishop of Seville——"

This sacrilegious assumption of dignity having been doomed the signal of discharge, forth rushed the overwhelming torrent from the syringe, full upon

the prelate's face; and as his mouth was opening to send forth fresh curses, it received a plentiful proportion of the flood which deluged him.

The peasant having executed his orders, quickly descended the ladder, leaving Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, to recover himself as he could.

Tio Andres ventured to visit him in the evening, but took care to be accompanied by Manuel, his labourer, with a fresh-filled syringe. The disconlate Archbishop sat brooding in silence over his misery, and answered not a word to all that the farmer said to him, until at last, when he was about to retire, the prelate suddenly spoke. "Is it possible," said he, "that you can be aware that I am really the Archbishop of Seville?"

Manuel made ready and presented.

"Hold," said Tio Andres; "he

raveth not, let us retire, our presence frets him."

"But I tell you," cried the Archbishop, "that I do rave,—that the devil would rave at such usage."

"Fire! Manuel," said the farmer, "or rather, Water!" and the obedient Manuel deluged the distracted Archbishop.

It is unnecessary to give any further accounts of the archiepiscopal ablutions; it may suffice to say, that they were repeated as often as the unhappy man was mad enough to pronounce the word Archbishop. Tio Andres found his task very tiresome; and after some weeks fretting about it, he at last resigned his office of jailor entirely into the hands of Manuel, under whose hydrostatic applications the Archbishop was reduced to the last extreme of misery. The fevering tor-

ment of his mental agony, together with his confinement and involuntary shower baths, at length undermined his health, and he lay upon his bed unable any longer to support the miseries of his situation. Manuel now became his nurse as well as his jailor, and attended him with the same sort of care that he would have done to an obstinate mule that was physicked. He never, however, ventured into the room without his portable shower bath, having an instinctive horror of a madman in his phrenzy fits.

One evening, as Manuel brought him his food, the languid Archbishop turned his eyes upon him, and faintly said, "Manuel, I am dying."

"Not yet, good master, not yet," replied the kind-hearted peasant, who really began to feel that sort of affection which arises from habitual inter-

course with any creature; "shall I get thee a priest, he added."

"No, Manuel, no," replied the dying man; "it is but going to Seville that could help me, soul or body; do you remember the goodly looking body that I carried with me some two or three months since, good Manuel?"

"Aye, by the mass," said the peasant, "thou hadst a mighty roundness about thee."

"Look now, Manuel, at this flat deficiency of flesh, this hanging looseness of skin; dost think I am the same man, good lad? Oh! who would know me for Pablo, Archbishop of Seville."

Manual produced his shower bath.

"No, no," exclaimed the affrighted prelate, "I tell thee I am not Archbishop of Seville, for the life of St. Isidor show me not that horrifying

instrument, or drown me at once in mercy." Manuel laid down his arms, and the Archbishop continued.

"Manuel, my good friend Manuel, though I am not an Archbishop, yet I am a very rich man. I have much gold and silver. If thou wouldst convey me to Seville, I would reward thee with five hundred doubloons."

Manuel shook his head; "what warranty have I for believing this?"

The anxious Archbishop made an effort to rise; and placing his forefingers across, he kissed the sacred sign they formed, exclaiming, "by the faith of an Arch——"

"Aye, an Arch-madman," said Manuel, maliciously glancing at his instrument of torture.

"No," replied the prelate, "by the faith of a Christian man and a Spaniard, by the word of a gentleman,—by this

sacred sign and the salvation it betokens, I swear I will give thee a thousand ounces of gold, if thou wilt place me on the bridge at Seville."

There was a hesitating manner in Manuel, which encouraged the Archbishop, and urged him to strive to the utmost to take advantage of it. Despair made him cunning and eloquent; he was lavish of princely promises, and aptly pointed out the little risk there was when opposed even to the chance of their being performed.

His persuasions were at length successful; for the peasant, dazzled by the promise of so much wealth, shrewdly determined not to assist him in escaping only, but to take him himself to Seville, where, if he performed his promise, well and good; if not, he could very easily bring him back again.

Escape was easy, for Tio Andres

placed all confidence in Manuel; the farmer's stable supplied a couple of stout mules; the return of long banished hope inspired the Archbishop with fresh strength; and accordingly the ladder, which had so frequently indulged the curious in a peep at the wild beast, was now the means of letting the monster loose; and at midnight, nearly three months after his arrival at Zufre, Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, found himself again on the road to his palace.

While he is hugging himself with joy at his escape, and following his guide and guard with all speed, it is necessary that I should inform the reader of the important events which have taken place in his absence.

Taking for granted all the surprise, dismay, and confusion with which the General Inquisitor and the household

of his Excellency were struck, and passing over in silence all the measures which were taken to search for the persons who had disappeared, I will at once proceed to state that all trace of his Excellency being lost, the General Inquisitor, and the heads of the clergy at Seville assembled in secret synod to decide on the steps which were to be taken. Great difficulty existed in coming to any decision, which was neither settled at the first nor second meeting; and, in the mean time, lest the truth might be divulged, and the public mind agitated upon the subject, all such persons as were likely to give intelligence of the Archbishop's absence, were secured in the prisons of the Inquisition.

A second and a third week elapsed, and still no information could be obtained as to the prelate's fate; and as

all hope of discovering him began to be relinquished, the superior clergy began to consider how the affair could most be turned to their profit. Such an unaccountable disappearance could only be miraculously resolved; and the last good office they could now perform for their defunct chief, was to make him a saint; accordingly a worthy and veracious hermit, inhabiting a small hermitage about three leagues distant from Seville, called the Ermita de San Leandro, was rewarded with a considerable benefice upon his solemnly deposing, that, whilst performing mass in his little chapel, the most illustrious Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, suddenly appeared before him, having descended through the roof, which closed after admitting him.

"Frail brother," said the holy man, "by the intervention of the blessed

San Leandro of Seville, I am called from the guiding of my flock and the mortifications of this world, without passing through the doors of death. The holy San Leandro, however, commissions me in the first place to save your soul from everlasting perdition; you have hitherto been his faithful servant, but are now in the commission of mortal sin, from which I hereby absolve you, upon the condition of your inflicting upon yourself three flagilations with this scourge, and rigorously fasting for three whole days:" so saying, and delivering the scourge, the Archbishop re-ascended through the roof.

This miraculous relation having undergone a regular ecclesiastical examination, having been authentically vouched for, and being moreover fully confirmed by the disappearance of the

Archbishop, and the appearance of the scourge, was published and proclaimed in all the churches of Seville, and posted in the corners of all the streets. It was, of course, fully believed. Fresh offerings were made by devout people to the shrine of San Leandro; his chapel in the cathedral was crowded with new donations of little wax figures. Pilgrimages were made to the ermita, where the scourge was shown, and a slight fissure which had remained in the roof. If any doubts could have remained of the truth of the miracle, these proofs would effectually have removed them; and though last, not least of the effects of this prodigious miracle, the sainted Archbishop was extolled in the most devout manner, and a bull of canonization was eagerly anticipated. The bigotry with which the people gave

credit to all that was told them, was amply exemplified in this, as in many other of the miracles recorded in the Romish calendar. But in no individual was this bigotry more strikingly displayed, than in the Marquis of Bohorquia, who, forgetting all that had passed, was as throughly convinced that his friend, the Archbishop, was a saint in heaven, as any of the lowest of the blind crowd who made the streets ring with shouting the praises of San Pablo de Sevilla.

A very few days after this miracle was promulgated, however, the happy Marquis departed this life, having been comforted by perfect absolution for all his sins by his father confessor and feeling his conscience echo the assurance which that worthy priest gave him, that he was about to witness the glorious exaltation of his sainted friend.

News had been dispatched to Mad-

rid and to Rome, of the miraculous translation of Pablo, Archbishop of Seville, and every body was in eager expectation of learning who was to be his successor, when the shadowy remnant of that corpulent prelate, worn to death with impotent rage, fevered with despair, and, moreover, in woeful plight from having made an unaccustomed journey of many leagues in a few hours, upon a high trotting mule, arrived in the Barrio of Triana, shortly after the sun had set, in a moonless December evening.

"Hast ever been in Seville, good Manuel?" asked the prelate.

"Never in my life," was the reply.

"So much the better," thought the Archbishop, "for there will then be no difficulty in getting you within side the walls of the Inquisition, out of which you never shall step more."

The only consolation which had

supported this heartless wretch, during the fatigue of the journey, had been the anticipation of having one victim at least, to wreak his vengeance upon; and in the absence of more desirable objects of revenge, the poor Manuel was destined to bear the brunt of his malice. Not an innocent ducking had he received from the peasant's hand, but he promised himself the pleasure of paying it with usurious interest, in the deadly form of the funnel or the pulley; and his sacred oath and lavish liberality were absolutely unregarded.

"Well, here we are at Seville, Señor Archbishop, or Señor Madman, or Señor Prince, or whoever you are," said Manuel, "where are we to go to? I have brought you here; and since you are at home, you must guide me now." The peasant said this with a

sullen air; for by the way he had bethought him that when at Seville, he might not have the power of securing the return of his prisoner, if he should fail in performing the conditions agreed upon. However, it was now too late for reflections of this kind, and he had no alternative but to carry his plan through and to trust to the saints.

"Turn to the right honest Manuel, and knock boldly at those great gates, which but for the darkness you would see, but as it is, you must feel for."

The peasant did as he was bid, and let a ponderous projection of iron fall upon its corresponding nob. The little grated square was immediately opened; and the porter's face became visible within.

"Who's there," he asked.

"Open," said the Archbishop; who,

under the circumstances of his long absence, dress, and diminished appearance, thought it better to conceal his identity until he was in a more proper situation to avow it; he therefore made use of the token of authority, or watchward, by which the agents of the Inquisition were known to each other, and the gates wheeled back on their hinges to admit them.

Partly concealing his face, he said, "Conduct me instantly to the General Inquisitor, and place this person in security until you receive his orders. The token he had given was sufficient to procure him obedience in both particulars.

When Manuel heard the word Inquisitor mentioned, and saw the black cloaks of the persons surrounding him, his heart sunk within him; he cursed himself for a fool, and had

hardly presence of mind sufficient to recommend himself to his saint.

In the meanwhile, the Archbishop was ushered into the presence of the General Inquisitor, and in lieu of salutation he flung himself into a seat, exclaiming, " A pretty Inquisition, forsooth, this tribunal of Seville;—I might have been poignarded, poisoned, drowned, or delivered over to eternal perdition, for aught that your paternity cared. Where have your alguazils and familiars been, that they found me not out before now, Señor Inquisitor?"

But the astonishment of his paternity kept him perfectly silent; he started from his seat, and gazed as upon a ghost.

" Aye! look at me, by St. Isidor. This is not the fair-feeding fine-lying Archbishop of Seville, and yet it is

very me, by San Pablo. But I'll have flesh for my flesh and blood for my tears. I am wasting time. There is a wretch below waiting his doom,—let him be put into the very deepest, dampest, deathliest hole that has ever been dug in the palace. Why gazes your paternity so emptily upon me? —To business, I say;—my soul thirstest for revenge."

The Inquisitor was still silent. When he had in some degree recovered from his first surprise, he was thrown into the most perplexing confusion of mind that can be imagined. He had been the proposer and main instigator of the farce of the miracle;—he had never liked the Archbishop, who interfered a great deal too much with his office. A special friend and patron of his own was talked of as the successor to the Archbishopric.—

What was to be done ?—It was absolutely impossible to expose the falsehood of the pretended miracle of San Leandro. The disgrace to the individuals who arranged the matter would be dreadful ; but what was much worse, the church in general would fall into disrepute, and the great cause of the faith would be inevitably weakened. This was decisive and final in the mind of the Inquisitor ;—the Archbishop, or rather the late Archbishop, must not come to life again ; and what rendered the measure of preventing his resuscitation not only wise but laudable, was the consideration, that under existing circumstances, he would undoubtedly be canonized ; whereas, his future existence in the world might very probably frustrate the intentions of his pious friends. The Inquisitor gained

time for making up his mind, by gaping in astonishment at the apparition; and when he had formed his decision, he acted with great prudence.

"Has your illustrious Excellency but *now* returned to Seville?"—said he.

"But *now* returned! By the mass, but I am glad that the power of speech has returned to your paternity. Marry have I!—But now I arrived, conducted by a boor who has been my jailor for the last —— oh, for a century for aught that I know."

"And has your Excellency not spoken to any one?" asked the Inquisitor.

"No! by San Isidor. I swore by that Saint that I would not return to my palace until I had had a taste of something like revenge."

"And you shall keep your oath."

said the General Inquisitor, clapping his hands sharply.

An attendant officer entered. "Sanguero and Morales on the instant," continued the Inquisitor, and the officer left the room.

The Archbishop was indulging himself by venting his revenge in words as black as such a heart as his alone could conceive, or such lips could utter. While he was rapidly proceeding, the two alguazils entered the apartment, and looked at their master for orders.

"Take that man to a dungeon on the second range," said the Inquisitor.

"What man?" exclaimed the Archbishop; but his demand needed no reply, for before one could have been given he was seized on either side.

"Gag him," added the Inquisitor;

and the hurricane of rage that was bursting forth was effectually stopped in its progress, by an apt and commodious instrument, which, with a spring lock, was immediately fastened over his mouth, and round his neck.

A leaden hue overspread the haggard features of the wretched man. No earthly torment could exceed that which he suffered; it was beyond the power of his weakened frame to bear. Silently, but rapidly, he was carried downwards, and deposited in one of the same intolerable pits which he had destined to be the prison of Manuel. The alguazils laid him upon a heap of straw, and proceeded to remove the gag. When the spring was touched, and the iron instrument was taken from his mouth, a torrent of blood followed it. His unvented rage had burst a blood-vessel, which was co-

piously pouring forth its contents. The alguazils retired, and left him to himself; for a whole night his detestable spirit lingered in its mortal habitation, and did not leave it until all the torments that a human being can endure had been exhausted upon him.

The General Inquisitor hastened to summon the trembling Manuel to his presence, and, by dint of much cross-examination, he procured from him an account of what had happened to the Archbishop at Zufre. The poor peasant was confined in one of the prisons until the General Inquisitor had fully satisfied himself of the truth of his statement, and obtained further information from Tio Andres, who was also brought before him, by confidential alguazils dispatched for that purpose. Finding, however, that these persons were fully impress-

ed with the idea that their prisoner had been a madman, and, as such, had been placed in the retired village of Zufre by the clemency of the Inquisition, his paternity thought it most prudent to confirm that idea; and accordingly he told them that the unhappy man's lunacy was of too scandalous and sacrilegious a nature, and was proved to be too incurable, to make the exertion of any further lenity possible. He dismissed them, therefore, to their homes, judging, that if any suspicion of the truth should ever arise, this conduct would be the best means of setting it at rest.

THE END.

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